

BARRE GAZETTE

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Food Pantry offers drive-thru service

By Karen A. Lewis
Correspondent

BARRE – They call it the “monthly miracle” and for many, this miracle has provided the food to keep families from going hungry.

Normally a large group of selfless volunteers are seen helping at the monthly distribution days and nights for the Barre Food Pantry. However, last Thursday evening at the Barre Congregational Church the helpers may have been few, but their contributions were enormous.

With the closing of everything going on around the area and people being advised to stay home as much as possible, board members from the food pantry completely understand and wanted to comply with the direction to the best of their ability. Thus, the reason for the limited volunteers, though people still need to eat and depend on their assistance.

A drive-thru service seemed to be a perfect solution to combat the complex situation and based on the results from last week, a big success.

“It allowed for physical distancing and our clients seemed at ease and happy with this arrangement,” said Barre Food Pantry board member and volunteer Chuck Radlo. “We provided food to 41 households Thursday, six of them new to the Barre Food Pantry. Our previous high for a Thursday night distribution was 26 households.”

What began approximately 30 years ago by Rose and Ellis Park at the Christ Episcopal Church in South Barre, the Barre Food Pantry transitioned to the Barre Congregational Church in 2011, when the other church closed their doors.

“They recognized that the idyllic appearance of living in the country could be misleading, obscuring poverty and food insufficiency, food insecurity and hunger,” Radlo said, referring to the Parks. “This situation

See FOOD PANTRY, page 5



Barre Food Pantry volunteers Sonja Blaney, from left and Irene Evory organize food before the distribution last Thursday.



Barre Food Pantry volunteer Mike Blaney lends some muscle as he helps last Thursday night at the distribution.



Barre Food Pantry volunteer Rich Barca carries a bag of food out to a client's car as they tried a new drive up service last Thursday.

MassDOT holds design public hearing

Public comments on Main Street Rte. 68 project

By Ellenor Downer
Staff Writer

HUBBARDSTON – Over two dozen residents and town officials attended a design public hearing to discuss the proposed highway reconstruction of Route 68 from Elm and Brigham Streets to Curtis Recreation Field.

MassDOT highway superintendent Jonathan Gulliver and chief engineer Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E. held a public hearing in the Slade Building Thursday, March 5. Gulliver said the \$4.9 million project would receive 80 percent federal funding and 20 percent funding from MassDOT. The \$4.9 million did not include the cost for right of ways.

He said the project following the hearing was ready to progress to the 75 percent design phase.

The design should be at 100 percent by early fall. The project once started would take about 15 months to complete. Gulliver said it was the town's responsibility to acquire all rights of way and land. It included six permanent easements and 50 temporary ones for the project. He said property owners would be notified and were entitled to an appraisal for compensation.

In March 2017, the town received approval for MassDOT

See MASSDOT, page 5

North Brookfield Elementary School receives MRA award

By Karen A. Lewis
Correspondent

NORTH BROOKFIELD – In the midst of all the current bad news, North Brookfield Elementary School (NBES) was recently given the exciting news the school had been chosen to receive the Mass Reading Association (MRA) Exemplary Reading Program award, an accolade given to only one school each year.

“We are so excited and honored,” said NBES principal, Sarah Priestly. “While the award is not tied to any financial benefits directly, we hope that the recognition will make us eligible for grant opportunities in the future. We can also offer to open our doors to visiting districts that are interested in building strong literacy programs in their schools.”

Although the award recognizes a school with an outstanding ELA program, the purpose of the recognition is to draw public attention to exceptional programs in exemplary Massachusetts schools each year. Any public, private, charter and parochial schools in the state are eligible to receive the award.

“We were nominated by Chris Omasta, a North Brookfield parent and a teacher in the Wachusett district,” said NBES reading specialist



Turley Publications Submitted Photo

Supporting the culture of literacy, North Brookfield Elementary School Principal Sarah Priestley reads a Dr. Seuss book to an elementary class during Community Reading Day earlier this month.

ist and literacy coach, Robin Pratt. “We had to apply and there were guidelines for the application.”

Pratt explained after the MRA award committee read through all the applications and selected finalists, the staff at NBES were thrilled to discover they were one of the contenders.

“Once chosen as a finalist, the MRA visited our school to see reading in action,” stated Pratt. “A

team of two spent three and a half hours visiting classes and meeting with teachers. The committee then met and reviewed all their site visits and we were chosen.”

An invitation to the annual April MRA Reading Conference held in Boston, where the award would have been presented was unfortunately cancelled. However, a banner announcing the award will be sent to be displayed out-

side the school.

The application was a lengthy process, with a short window of time to complete. A team of NBES teachers, including Cassie LaCoy, Michael Shelburne, Gina-Marie Mazerolle and Monique Dubuc, along with director of curriculum Jeanne Powers, school committee chair, Maria Tucker, Priestley and Pratt worked together on the project.

Perhaps the selection committee was impressed by the major overhaul NBES has undergone in the last five years as they've worked to implement better and more consistent ELA programs that transition from kindergarten through grade six, the highest level in the building.

Within the application, a variety of evidence had to be presented. From explaining why the new NBES reading program is consistent with sound theory, research and practice, to students being able to demonstrate success in reading, for proof that administrators, teachers, reading coaches and others provide leadership and vision for the district reading program, to even verifying the local community was involved and supportive of the reading program, the application left no stone unturned.

One statistic that may have stood out from the competition, the significant increase in the NBES MCAS scores. Since the Next Generation MCAS test-

See NBES, page 6

'Poor man's fertilizer' covers the ground



Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer

A field in Oakham lies under what may be the last snow of the season. An early spring snow, also known as “poor man's fertilizer,” covers the ground March 24, 2020.

Governor Baker activates Massachusetts National Guard

HANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE – Gov. Charlie Baker activated up to 2,000 Massachusetts National Guard members to assist with the State of Emergency declared on March 10, 2020 as the region continues to respond to the spread of the coronavirus.

The Massachusetts National Guard is ready to assist local communities and to react to requests for assistance through the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency. Some of these requests could include, but are not limited to: medi-

cal, transportation and logistics.

Throughout its 383 years of existence, the Massachusetts National Guard has been faced with many challenges, some of which helped form our nation. The Massachusetts National Guard is prepared and committed to answer the requests of cities and towns in the Commonwealth.

More information on the scope and nature of the Massachusetts National Guard's response support missions will be released as the situation develops.



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News of the Towns



Round Town
Ellenor Downer
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Barre Vietnam veterans not on memorial should contact veteran’s agent

The Vietnam Memorial in North Park may be upgraded to veterans that left Barre to serve their country and did not have their name on the memorial. A Vietnam veteran from Barre not on the list should contact Anthony Musnicki, Veterans Agent for Barre at 978-337-2351. The deadline to respond to the town’s veteran’s agent is Wednesday, April 1.

Town buildings close
All Barre Town buildings will be closed to the public, except by appointment and include the Henry Woods Building, Woods Memorial Library, the Council on Aging (senior center), old Town Hall, the public safety building, fire stations and DPW. Please call an office before visiting in many cases staff is able to assist over the phone or by mail. Meals on Wheels program and wellness checks for seniors will continue.

QRSD offers free meals to go at selected schools

REGION – The Quabbin Regional School District (QRSD) has plans in place to ensure students, who rely on their schools for breakfast and lunch continue to receive that service.

Walk-up distribution of daily prepared meals at selected school sites for families to pick up will be available Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. until school reopens. These meals will be available for free for anyone 18 and under regardless of what school they attend. Each child will receive a breakfast and lunch.

Families can access meals from either location listed: Hardwick Elementary School (no pin required) or Quabbin Middle & High School (will need 4 digit pin# or student name).

Cold “grab and go” options will be available and meals must be taken and consumed off site. If people have difficulty with transportation for pickup or other concerns, they may call 978-355-4668.

Barre Transfer Station

BARRE – Effective March 21, the Barre Board of Health announces the following changes at the Transfer Station as part of COVID-19 safety measures.

- There will be a drop box for payments of bags.
- \$20 per sleeve for large bags and \$31.25 per sleeve for small bags.
- The transfer center will accept cash or check for exact amount. No change will be given. No credit card sales.
- The transfer center will be only accepting trash and recycling, all other services will be closed until further notice.

Barre election update

BARRE - Ellen Glidden, Barre Town Clerk, said as of Tuesday, March 24 the town election for Minda, April 6 was still happening. She will be meeting with the board of selectmen Monday, March 30 to discuss the election.

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Service While You Wait

Postponements and cancellations due to the coronavirus pandemic

MOC CFCE temporarily suspended playgroups and other family events until at least April 7. Governor Baker declared a state of emergency hoping to contain the spread of the coronavirus across the Commonwealth. The Parent Child Plus program will continue to operate with your Early Learning Specialist continuing to visit with enrolled.

North Brookfield Savings Bank postponed its free five-week financial literacy program, which was scheduled from April 2 through April 30.

North Brookfield Savings Bank postponed its free homebuyers and brews homebuyers’ night scheduled for April 30 at Oakholm Brewing Co. in Brookfield.

Massachusetts 4-H programs, activities and club meeting are cancelled until further notice. This includes advisory councils, fair boards, horse advisories and events. Groups are allowed to meet virtually.

Oakham Congregational Church postponed its breakfast and annual Easter Egg hunt, both scheduled for April 4. If the situation improves the breakfast and egg hunt may be rescheduled for after Easter.

Oakham Congregational Church will not hold Sunday worship services March 29 or April 5.

Hubbardston Senior Center, 7A Main St., Hubbardston is closed until at least Tuesday, April 7. The eggs will still be available Thursdays at the same time and produce will still be available Wednesdays and Fridays with pickup u outside. People may call the senior center at 978-928-1400, extension 211

with any questions.

Friends of the Stone Church in Gilbertville postponed its spring concert on March 29 and the silent film “Peter Pan” on April 18. Updates will be posted at FriendsoftheStoneChruch.org.

The Gardner Museum, following recommendations from local and state health officials and American Alliance of Museums guidelines in response to ongoing COVID-19 prevention measures, will be closed to the public effective immediately until at least April 7.

Stage on Main, 17 South Main St., Orange has suspended all events until at least April 7 as a precaution against COVID-19.

Fobes Memorial Library in Oakham will be closed to the public until at least April 7, a which time the situation will be reassessed. Library staff will be available to answer calls and assist with digital resources.

All Barre Town Buildings will be closed to the public, except by appointment and include the Henry Woods Building, Woods Memorial Library, the Council on Aging (senior center), old Town Hall, the public safety building, fire stations and DPW. Please call an office before visiting in many cases staff is able to assist over the phone or by mail. Meals on Wheels program and wellness checks for seniors will continue.

The town of Hubbardston is closing all town buildings to the public until at least April 7. Offices will continue to provide services of the government to residents. The closure will result in the deliv-

ery of services remotely. All public safety operations will continue.

Theatre at the Mount (TAM) at Mount Wachusett Community College in Gardner has cancelled their production of “Beauty and the Beast, Jr.,” scheduled for April 5-10. Tickets purchased online will be refunded back to the credit card used for purchase, within 30 days. Cash purchases will be refunded upon request by phone at 978-630-9388 or by email at box-office@mwcc.mass.edu.

The Haston Free Public Library in North Brookfield library trustees decided to close the library effective immediately until at least April 7. Library staff will be on site for short periods Monday through Thursday to collect mail and respond to phone messages.

April art exhibition hosted by the Hardwick Historical Society and featuring local artist Frank J. Bly scheduled for April 4 and 5 at the Hardwick Town House, Hardwick Common, has been postponed indefinitely.

East Quabbin Land Trust postponed its 19th annual dinner and silent auction to Saturday, Sept. 19.

The Women’s Leadership Luncheon Series scheduled for spring 2020 at the HCC MGM Culinary Art Institute has been cancelled. The four-part, monthly “Leadership in Your Future 2020” series was set to begin Friday, March 27 and continue on April 10, May 8 and June 19.

The American Red Cross cancelled its Heroes Breakfasts events scheduled for March 26, April 3 and April 9.

Listening Wellness Center offers teletherapy sessions

BARRE – In an effort to flatten the curve and follow public health recommendations in the community, Listening Wellness Center is taking the following steps:

Yoga studio classes will be suspended until at least March 31.

After School Program has already been suspended while the schools are closed.

The main building will be closed to clients for at least two weeks.

Many providers are offering teletherapy sessions, online classes or workshops and other virtual services. People may keep in touch with their provider and join the Facebook page for regular updates. Many services are free or covered by insurance.

People who know of resources to help people stay healthy, stay connected to social networks, meet basic needs or seek assistance due to financial hardship, feel free to send Listening more information.

Listening office staff are working remotely. People may contact them at listeningwellnesscenter@gmail.com or leave a message at 978-355-3501.

BSER to hold spring shavings sale

OAKHAM – Bay State Equine Rescue (BSER) will hold its spring shavings sale. Pick up will be Saturday, April 25 from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at Camp Marshall, 92 McCormick Road, Spencer. Minimum order is ten. Cost is

\$4.90 per bale plastic wrapped up to 199 and \$4.75 for 200 and up. Bale is 3.25 cubic feet compressed or 7.5 cubic feet loose. People may contact Sharon at 508-892-0233 or sah@baystateequinrescue.com.

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Hubbardston
Ellenor Downer
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Meal delivering for seniors

MOC home delivered meals will still be delivered. The in house meals at the Hubbardston Senior Center will be pre-packaged and delivered also. Seniors may call the Senior Center at 978-928-1400, extension 211 for more information. The Friends of the Hubbardston Seniors offered to pick up groceries or medicines for seniors. Seniors in need of this service may call Darlene at 774-242-7779. She will make arrangements for someone to pick up and deliver.

Hubbardston Senior Center
Hubbardston Senior Center, 7A Main St., Hubbardston is closed until Tuesday, March 31. The eggs will still be available Thursdays at the same time and produce will still be available Wednesdays and Fridays with pickup outside. People may call the senior center at 978-928-1400, extension 211 with any questions.

Town buildings closure reminder
The town of Hubbardston is closing all town buildings to the public until March 31. Offices will continue to provide services of the government to residents. The closure will result in the delivery of services remotely. All public safety operations will continue.

Barre Dining Center

Note: There is only meal delivery, no meals at the nutrition site.
BARRE — Elder Services of Worcester Area Nutrition Program welcomes guests to dine at the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Road. The following meals will be served for the week of March 30.
Volunteers are needed at the Barre dining site. Volunteers are needed for Meals on Wheels (mileage reimbursement) and in the kitchen. People should contact 978-355-5027.
MON. – Chicken Mornay, couscous, roasted Roman vegetables, butterscotch pudding, diet = sugar free vanilla pudding, marble rye bread
TUES. – Meatloaf with gravy, garlic mashed potatoes, peas and onions, mixed fruit, whole wheat bread
WED. – Roast turkey with gravy, mashed sweet potatoes, roasted Brussels sprouts, pear crisp, diet = pears, Italian bread
THURS. – Pork rib-i-que, mac n’cheese, green beans, fresh orange, sandwich roll
FRI. – Fish sticks, tartar sauce, potato wedges, broccoli with red peppers, pumpkin spice cake, diet = half piece, marble rye bread
*Diabetic friendly dessert
**Higher sodium entree
Meal includes milk and margarine. Menus are subject to change. All meals are served at about 11:45 a.m. each weekday. Reservations should be made the day before by calling 978-355-5027 before 10:30 a.m. The donation of \$2.50 per meal helps keep the program running.

Hannaford dedicates shopping hours for vulnerable customers

REGION – Hannaford Supermarkets announced effective Tuesday, March 24 that its stores will offer dedicated shopping hours for people age 60 and older, as well as those with compromised immune systems. Stores will open early from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. on Tuesday through Thursday to service this vulnerable population and allow a less crowded shopping environment, which enables better social distancing.

In addition, Hannaford shortened its general store-operating hours starting Saturday, March 21 in order to provide for additional time to clean, stock shelves and give associates additional time to rest. The new daily hours are 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Providing a designated shopping period for seniors and at-risk individuals allows this population to shop prior to other customers being in the store. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), people who are 60 and over and those with compromised immune systems are most vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus. Although associates will not be requesting ID for entry, Hannaford urges the community to respect the intention for the early opening.

“In this time of extraordinary circumstances, it is more important than ever to find new ways to better serve our community,” said Ericka Dodge, Hannaford spokesperson. “These new hours will support all our associates and customers, especially those that are most-vulnerable.”

Both efforts are temporary due to the unprecedented demand and resulting need, attributed to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Each will be reviewed and revised as circumstances evolve.

Hannaford Supermarkets, based in Scarborough, Maine, operates 182 stores in the Northeast. Stores are located in Maine, New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Hannaford employs more than 26,000 associates. Additional information can be found at Hannaford.com.

CHECK OUT ALL THE
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News of the Towns

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Note: All meetings are closed to the public and will be held remotely.

BARRE

Library Trustees – March 26 at 6:15 p.m. and April 8 at 7 p.m.
Board of Selectmen – March 30 at 7 p.m., April 6 and April 21, both at 6:30 p.m.
Council on Aging – April 1 at 1 p.m.
250th Anniversary Committee – April 1 at 6:30 p.m.
Barre Housing Authority – April 2 at 3 p.m.
Town election – April 6 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Historical Commission – April 6 at 7 p.m.
Board of Assessors – April 7 and April 21 at 6 p.m.
Felton Field Commission – April 7 at 6:30 p.m.
Planning Board – April 7 and April 21 at 7 p.m.
Library Trustees – April 8 at 7 p.m.
Board of Health – April 13 at 5 p.m.
Water Commission – April 13 at 6:30 p.m.
DPW Commission – April 13 at 7 p.m.
Cable Advisory Committee – April 14 at 7 p.m.
Town Administrator Search Committee – April 15 at 7 p.m.
Sewer Commission – April 16 at 7 p.m.

HARDWICK

Board of Selectmen – March 30, April 13, 27, May 11, May 26 and June 8 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Health – April 2 at 6:30 p.m.
Paige Library Trustees – April 2 at 7 p.m.
Council on Aging – April 9 at 9:30 a.m.
Gilbertville Public Library – April 10 at 4 p.m.
Gilbertville-Wheelwright Sewer Commissioners – April 13, May 11 and June 8at 5:30 p.m.
Conservation Commission – April 21 at 6:30 p.m.

HUBBARDSTON

Council on Aging – March 26 at 10:30 a.m.
Board of Selectmen – March 30, April 13 and April 27 at 6:30 p.m.
Open Space Committee – March 31 and April 28 at 7 p.m.
Planning Board – April 1 at 6:30 p.m.
Library Trustees – April 2 and April 10 at 7 p.m.
Historical Commission – April 4 at 10 a.m.
Conservation Commission – April 7 at 7 p.m.

PETERSHAM

Planning Board – March 26 and April 16 at 7 p.m.
Nichewaung Inn and Academy Committee 2020 – March 30 and April 13 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Health – April 2 at 7 p.m.
Open Space & Recreation Committee – April 7 at 6:30 p.m.
Conservation Commission – April 7 at 7:30 p.m.
Cemetery Commission – April 9 at 7 p.m.
Capital Improvement Planning Committee – April 9 at 7 p.m.
Petersham Historic District – April 16 at 7 p.m.

RUTLAND

Ad Hoc By-Law Committee – March 31, April 7, April 14 and April 28 at 12:45 p.m.

EQLT reschedules annual meeting and silent auction

HARDWICK – Due to COVID-19 concerns, East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) rescheduled its 19th annual meeting and silent auction for Saturday, Sept. 19.

Hubbardston boards/committees to hold meetings on Zoom platform

HUBBARDSTON – While town buildings remain closed to the public, Hubbardston will resume holding public meetings on the Zoom platform unless otherwise designated.

While different than an in-person meeting, the Zoom platform allows residents to call into the meeting in real-time, participate through video and see elected officials/documents from their home devices. The town’s Cable Committee due to its functionality selected this platform. It also records the proceedings so residents can review the public meeting on the town’s website, social media platforms and/or the local cable channel (You Tube) at a later date.

All virtually held public meetings will comply with Govern Baker’s recent order regarding the Open Meeting Law and federal, state and local guidance for social distancing.

As with all public meetings, residents are welcomed and encouraged to attend – virtually. Log-in information for all virtual meetings will be posted along with the meeting agenda and when possible, prior to the meeting on the town’s social media platforms.

Dismas House seeks donations

WORCESTER – Dismas House seeks paper products for residents, as well as grocery cards to help defray grocery costs. People may mail any grocery cards to Dismas House, P.O. Box 30125, Worcester, MA 01603.

Corrections policy

The Barre Gazette will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2. To request a orrection, send information to Editor Ellenor Downer at barrenews@turley.com or call 978-355-4000. Corrections may also be requested in writing at Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

Polus Center receives Barre Savings Foundation grant



Turley Publications Photo by Karen A. Lewis

Stephen Brewer, president of the Barre Savings Charitable Foundation, from left, along with helpers Cedulie Benoit-Smith and Elliot Walsh award \$1,000 to Theresa Kane and Michael Lundquist of the Polus Center at All Things Irish held Saturday, March 7.

North Brookfield

Haston library director lists free online resources

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Library director, Dawn Thistle of Haston Free Public Library announces various book and database vendors are making resources freely available online during this crazy and difficult time.

C/W MARS member libraries approved implementing the OverDrive Instant Digital Card and it is now live. The Instant Digital Card allows patrons to log into OverDrive using their name and mobile number. Information will be posted soon on the staff and public websites. The Instant Digital Card will be helpful for patrons that cannot currently borrow in OverDrive because they do not have a library card or their card is blocked.

One of the providers of the statewide databases, Gale Cengage, is offering open access to some of its resources to support preK - undergraduate learning. These are resources that are not part of the statewide databases. People can use and share these resources with patrons, students and end users starting immediately.

Miss Humblebee’s Academy - an interactive kindergarten-readiness program that introduces children ages three to six to key concepts

in math, science, social studies, language and literacy, art and music. It’s as challenging as it is fun. The link is https://infotrac.gale.com/itweb/c19micro3?id=open&db=MHA.

Gale In Context: High School - supports student papers, projects, and presentations while empowering the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills with content aligned to national and state curriculum standards.The link is https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=SUIC&u=c19micro&password=open

Gale In Context: College - interdisciplinary content that reinforces the development of skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation.

The link is https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=CSIC&u=c-19micro&password=open. Gale In Context: Canada - an engaging online experience for those seeking contextual information on a broad range of Canadian topics, people, places, and events. The link is https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=CIC&sw=w&u=c-19micro&v=2.1&pg=BasicSearch&it=static&sid=CIC&password=open

These databases are not set

up the same way as the Gale databases. If people get asked for a password for any of these resources, use open.

The end date of access to these resources is unknown at this time.

People may view Gale’s online toolkit for responding to the coronavirus outbreak (resources, trainings, and more) at https://www.gale.com/covid-19support.

With Junior Library Guild, people may make themselves at home with JLG@HOME. With JLG Gold Standard eBooks for Elementary, Middle School and High School students, JLG Digital gives readers unlimited access to read books online from any device. There is no limit to the number of users, who can access the books, so tell a home-bound students to click to their hearts’ content. Titles enter and exit the digital stream regularly, so there are always new picks available.

People may check out JLG@HOME for more complimentary resources for readers including an upcoming live author talk series, a library of free on-demand webcasts, and a virtual event focused on middle-grade reads. Many of these on-demand webcasts are available to view with closed-captioning.

State library system offers webcasts

NORTH BROOKFIELD – Dawn Thistle, library director at Haston Free Public Library said the Massachusetts Library System offers people things they can do with or without children while stay-

ing in home.

The webcasts from author/illustrators (Mo Willems, Grace Lin, Jarrett J. Krosoczka) are especially great. There are also tours of museums and national parks

and group-sourced projects people can participate in, among other worthwhile activities. People may check it out at http://guides.masslib-system.org/COVID19/stayengaged.

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PRE-SEASON BIKE SALE		DELUXE DISHWASHER Reg. \$329.99 \$329.99	14 CU. FT. UPRIGHT FREEZER Reg. \$499.99 \$499.99
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Oakham

Ellenor Downer
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Town clerk lists town election info

Town clerk Chris Mardirosian announced the last day to obtain nomination papers is Friday, March 27 for the Monday, May 18 town election. The last day to submit nomination papers to registrars of voters for certification is Monday, April 6. The last day to file nomination papers to the town clerk is Monday, April 13. The last day to object or withdraw is Wednesday, April 15. The last day to register to vote for the annual town election is Tuesday, April 28. Positions on the ballot include: a two-year term to the board of health; one position each to board of selectmen, board of assessors, board of health, library trustees, cemetery commission and school committee, all three-year terms and a five-year term to planning board. Nomination papers may be picked up during regular business hours at the town clerk’s office – Monday evenings from 6-8 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. to noon. A minimum of 20 registered voters signatures is required. People may call the town clerk’s office at 508-882-5549, extension, 305 for more information.

BSER shavings sale reminder

Bay State Equine Rescue (BSER) will hold its spring shavings sale. Pick up will be Saturday, April 25 from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at Camp Marshall, 92 McCormick Road, Spencer. Minimum order is ten. Cost is \$4.90 per bale plastic wrapped up to 199 and \$4.75 for 200 and up. Bale is 3.25 cubic feet compressed or 7.5 cubic feet loose. People may contact Sharon at 508-892-0233or sah@baystateequinerescue.com.

Oakham Congregational cancels services

The Oakham Congregational Church will not hold Sunday worship services March 29 and April 5 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Church council will reassess the situation before Palm Sunday. The Oakham Congregational Church will postpone its breakfast and annual Easter egg hunt, both scheduled for April 4. If the situation improves the breakfast and egg hunt may be rescheduled for after Easter.

Fobes Memorial Library

The Fobes Memorial Library will be closed to the public until at least Tuesday, April 7, at which time the situation will be re-assessed. Library staff will be available to answer calls and assist with digital resources.

Country Bank supports area non-profits

WARE – Country Bank reported donations for 2019 totaling \$905,049. Through the bank’s philanthropic efforts, they provide support to local non-profits throughout the communities they serve; in 2019, more than 500 of these organizations received generous donations. Organizations receiving support included The Children’s Trust, Ludlow Community Center Boys and Girls Club, Ronald McDonald House, Habitat for Humanity, Project Bread and the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless.

Recognizing the importance and overwhelming need to help organizations that address hunger, Country Bank provided monetary donations to food programs throughout the region that exceeded \$100,000. The recipients of these funds included Friends of the Homeless, Springfield Rescue Mission and the Western Mass Food Bank as well as many local food pantries.

“Our desire to support and enrich our communities is not only a part of our mission, it’s truly who we are,” stated Paul Scully, president, and CEO of Country Bank. “Team members embody our Standards of Professional Excellence every day by applying the bank’s iSTEP core values of integrity, service, teamwork, excellence, and prosperity. These values continue to guide our mission, especially through our community involvement efforts.”

In addition, Country Bank’s Employee Charitable Giving Program raised more than \$30,000 in 2019 through events such as jeans days, bake sales and raffles. “Our team volunteered more than 1,000 hours of personal time at various events within our communities. These volunteer hours speak directly to our culture and our belief in helping others. Serving meals, filling backpacks for the homeless and building beds for children in need are just a few of the ways we gave back to our communities,” stated Jodie Gerulaitis, vice president of community relations.

To learn more about Country Bank’s Charitable Giving program, people may visit https://www.country-bank.com/communications-center/.

LOCAL Opportunity IS KNOCKING

STAFF WRITER POSITION

Turley Publications is seeking an energetic person to fill the position of staff writer for two of its weekly publications: the *Ware River News*, which covers Ware, Hardwick and Warren, and the *Quabog Current*, which covers the Brookfields, Sturbridge and New Braintree. This full-time position is based in our Ware office at 80 Main St. The successful candidate will have strong community journalism skills or the enthusiasm to develop them.

The staff writer will cover municipal meetings, features and general news; essentially everything that unfolds in small towns. Assignments will be for both newspapers as well as other companywide publications.

Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor’s degree or equivalent experience
- Own camera and photography experience preferred
- Enthusiasm for community journalism
- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced environment

Please email resume and three writing samples directly to Eileen Kennedy Managing Editor at ekennedy@turley.com.

Turley
Publications, Inc.
www.turley.com

Opinion

Editorial

Coronavirus is a real threat

Americans don't like being told what to do, and the government's been doing an awful lot of telling lately. Don't eat out. Don't send your kids to school. Don't have a party. Don't watch a parade. The past week has seen a massive upheaval in almost every aspect of almost every American's life — home, work, recreation. None of it has been welcome. But — to repeat the phrase we all hated when we heard it as children from our parents, our doctors and our teachers — it's for our own good. The point is to protect us from the coronavirus. The coronavirus that quarantined an entire metropolis in China. The coronavirus that shut down essentially the whole country of Italy. The coronavirus is not a possibility or a far-off fear. It's a real thing that has been killing thousands of people around the world. It's here now, and the only way we can stop it is to keep it from jumping from person to person. And the only way to do that is to keep people away from people.

A little skepticism about the claims made by politicians is a healthy thing, especially when they're trying to justify restrictions on freedom of movement and commerce. But this isn't a good time to take a chance on the experts being wrong. Everyone in a position of power is saying the same thing — the coronavirus is a real threat. Federal, state and local officials. Doctors and public health agencies. Business leaders. Politicians from both major parties.

That the American death toll hasn't yet reached the crisis levels of Italy or China is not a testament to some inherent superiority or hardness of the American public. It's merely a function of the fact that the coronavirus infected those countries earlier. Public health officials aren't responding to actual deaths on our shores. They're looking at how the disease has spread in other countries, and trying to stop it from spreading that way here.

- What can you do?
- * Practice good hygiene — wash hands frequently, cough into your sleeve rather than hand, disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items in the home.
 - * Stay home. Work from home, learn from home, eat at home. Shop online and have items delivered. Read books and watch television rather than going out for entertainment. Don't host or attend parties.
 - * Limit contact between elderly people and young people. Senior citizens are especially susceptible to Covid-19, and children can carry the virus without showing any symptoms.
 - * If you begin to experience a fever or flu-like symptoms, call your doctor.

Unfortunately, by the time symptoms appear, the patient has already been carrying — and spreading — the disease for as long as two weeks. Any of us could be infected right now and not realize it, so it's important that all of us work to halt its spread, whether we "feel sick" or not.

The government is forcing some of these choices on us. Schools, senior centers and increasingly town halls are closed. Public gatherings of large numbers of people have been banned. Restaurants are closed for all but takeout and delivery.

Some of these lifestyle changes are easy. Some are difficult. Some may even be annoying or burdensome. But every one of them is better than getting infected. And every one of them is better than getting your grandparents, your parents, or your elderly neighbors infected, too.

Guest column

Adventures of Gertrude the Cat

By Ruth Robinson

Dear folks,

Today, I had the "fright of my life." I was lying on the bed in the spare bedroom watching Missy cleaning the four windows. Then she took the full length mirror off the wall and started to clean it and the wall behind it. Just then the telephone rang and she leaned the mirror against the wall and went to answer the phone.

I was curious as to what that thing was and jumped off the bed. Holy Mackerel, it is a cat. I hunched up my back and hissed at the thing to show him, who was boss. It hunched its back and hissed right back. I growled and raised a paw and it did the same thing, but there was no noise from it — only my noise. What gives? Is that thing me? I don't know what I look like. I'll just step sideways and show my tail with the little curl at the top. Yep, that thing did the same thing.

Oh, oh, here comes Missy. I jumped up on the bed and watched her finish cleaning the mirror. As she hangs it back up, I saw a reflection of Missy.

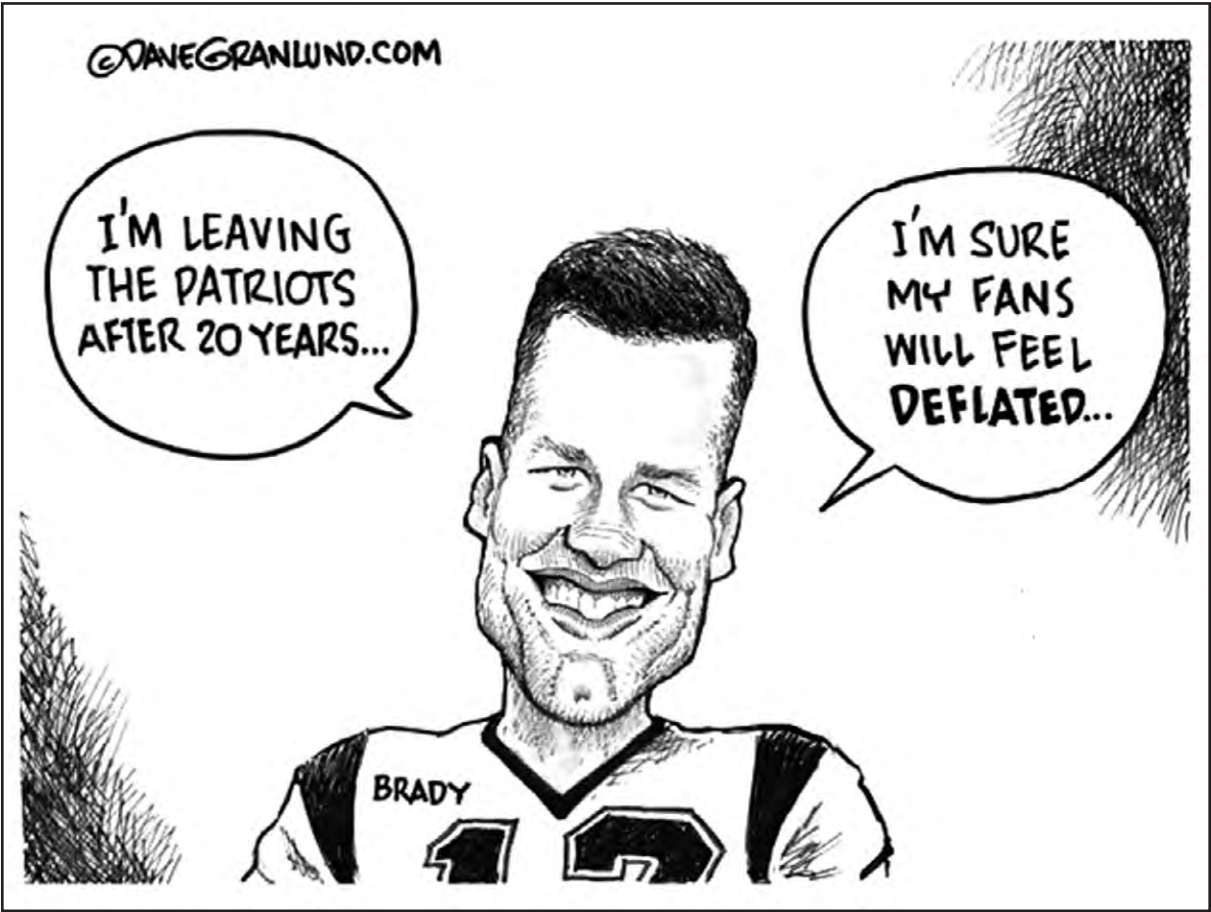
I knew what Missy looked like and now I know what I look like. Wow, I'm quite pretty.

I am glad it wasn't a new cat coming to live with us. I just lost two of my nine lives with that awful scare. Woe is me, that was the first time.

Now I just parade in front of the mirror and check my figure to see I am sleek and pretty. Yep, even at 18, I think I could attract another cat.

Later today, I found a Christmas bow on the kitchen floor and batted it all around unit it went under the refrigerator. Oh, no, my paw just wouldn't stretch far enough to get the bow out. Darn, I was having so much fun with batting it around.

Stay healthy folks.
Love,
Gertrude



In Past Pages

5 years ago (March 26, 2015)

Debbie Ennis of the Listening Wellness Center and an avid bicycle rider, offers a hands-on health and wellness program entitled "Wheels in Motion." This 6-week program is "geared towards children and their families, who could medically benefit from increased activity and nutritional counseling and/or for children, who could use techniques to improve their social skills." The project has been a long time dream for Ennis and was something she wanted to do, but did not have the funds. She received \$8,000 from Baystate Mary Lane Hospital through the Community Health Initiative Grant. She partnered with Worcester Earn A Bike, who will give the children a bike, helmet and water bottle.

For a group of language students at Quabbin Regional High School, Monday was not a typical school day. Thirty French exchange students shadowed their host family students to classes. Twenty-three language students from Quabbin along with a student or two from North Brookfield High School will be traveling to France from April 14-27. While there, the students will stay part of the time with the French students from Lycee Saint Joseph School in their homes. Quabbin Regional High School French teacher, Elizabeth Blake, had a friend and fellow teacher who took a job teaching English at the French school located in Avignon in the South of France. Both the Hardwick/New Braintree Cultural Council and the Oakham Cultural Council, local agencies that are supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency contributed funds to help cover field trips for the Quabbin students while they are in France.

The weather has not cooperated much for spring sports or events, and last Saturday's 40th anniversary of the St. Patrick's Day Road Race was to be no different with snow falling the day before until about 11:30 a.m. on race day. But at race time, skies were clear and temperatures blasted their way into the 40's, comfortable running weather and the 10K (6.2-mile) race went off without a hitch as more than 7,000 participants from competitive runners, to costumed fun-runners, to walkers took part in the annual event. Local runners include: Yvonne Feliciano of Hardwick, 49:15; Felipe Feliciano of Hardwick, 53:16; Deborah Rife of New Braintree, 1:13:22 and Maurice Fitzgerald of Hubbardston, 1:23:51.

10 years ago (April 1, 2010)

The next time people drive past Quabbin Regional Middle High School, 800 South St., on

LOOK BACK
Sure beats geometry - 1991



Turley Publications File Photo

Education with regard to the value and preparation of food had changed dramatically over the years. Nowadays, both boys and girls learn their lessons together, as these students demonstrate. Above are members of an eighth grade foods class at Quabbin Regional Jr./Sr. High School in Barre. They are seen testing different applesauce recipes they created in class. Sampling the recipes for taste, texture, appearance and nutritional content is part of their curriculum on fruit and vegetable nutrition. Seen here are (seated, from left): Rachel Oulette and Jason Scott. Standing are (from left): Laurie O'Connor, Derek Carpenter, Mary Gallant, Kelly Gaumond and Lance Bowley.

a federal holiday look at the new Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) flag flying and take a moment to respect those who have fallen. Dennis Fleming, Barre resident and patriot, recently worked with Todd Stewart, assistant principal and Dr. Maureen Marshall, superintendent, to get the flag flying at the school on the same ten federal holidays that is now required to be flown at federal buildings.

Quabbin Regional High School NJROTC Cadet Kimmy Howell of New Braintree was congratulated by Quabbin's Senior Naval Science Instructor, Captain Daniel Brennock, as she assumes command of the school's award winning unit.

The North Brookfield police are seeking the public's help in finding the vandals who vandalized gravesites at St. Joseph's Cemetery, probably late Saturday night or early Sunday morning. Seventeen tombstones were toppled; some laying in pieces and broken from bases. The Reverend Richard Carey said that, as the damaged stones are old, some more than 100 years old, it may be difficult to impossible to contact relatives of those buried there.

25 years ago (March 30, 1995)

Edwin Laitinen and Roland Sevigny instructed Hubbardston Nonesuch Garden Club members on how to prune and graft trees at a recent meeting. Laitinen, who has a Christmas tree operation on his 65 acres on Route 68, told those assembled about pruning evergreens to achieve optimum growth and proper shaping.

Quabbin school officials told parents of students in the middle-senior high school Tuesday night that it appears the middle and high school will be split into full double sessions before the building project can be completed. Probably, the high school would meet from 6:40 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., and the middle school, from 12:15 to 5:30 p.m.

Navy Lt. J.C. Craig Kennedy recently participated in an eight-day port visit to Boston, aboard the Spruance class destroyer USS John Hancock (DD 981). While in port, this ship served as the host ship to the French navy helicopter carrier Jeanne D'Arc and the frigate Germinal during their visit to Boston. Kennedy, son of John and Nancy Kennedy of Hubbardston, is a 1988 graduate of Quabbin Regional High School. He joined the Navy in May of 1992 and works on board the destroyer as the ship's intelligence officer.

38 years ago (March 31, 1982)

On a very cold but bright Sunday morning, members of Barre Post 2 and George L. Thorng Post 404 joined selectmen and other townspeople in saluting the veterans of the Viet Nam conflict, which involved over ten million Americans in the period from 1961 to 1975. Monsignor Thomas J. Daley offered the 8 o'clock Mass at St. Joseph's Church for the dead and disabled of the war, in particular for Edward Cormier, a Barre boy killed in Viet Nam. Nearly forty veterans of three wars participated in the church services and the short march to North Park from Post 2 quarters, a considerable showing given the weather, the hour, and the relative newness of Viet Nam Veterans Day as a yearly observance.

A birthday party was given to Edwin Prentiss of Main Street in

See PAST PAGES, page 4

Guest Column

My mentor was Pete Goddard, 1948 - 2020

By Isaac J. LaDue
Eighth grade homeschooler in Hardwick

As I grew up, I became fond of watching people fix things, mostly engines. I learned by age 10 that all good things break. Eventually I got an old, 11-horse, 2-seater Go Kart. When it broke, I would fix it. But one time, I just could not fix it. That was when my grandfather, a big supporter of my mechanics along with my grandmother, suggested that I go see Pete.

Pete Goddard was a mechanic, a master welder and a heavy-duty operator. For many years, he worked for Pratt & Whitney, but by the time I needed help with my Go-Kart he was retired from that and worked from his own shop in Hardwick. He called his shop Dragon Works.

So, we loaded up my Go-Kart and headed to Pete's. When we arrived, I instantly liked his shop with all the old machinery and equipment around. Pete came out and introduced himself to me. Then we headed over to the Go-Kart.

Pete and my grandfather started on it. I was watching on the side. They got it running and I was amazed. It took them not even an hour and I had spent days and did not even get close.

After that visit, my visits got more and more frequent as Pete and I became good friends. He soon became my mentor. We fixed and studied together as he taught me many skills. For instance, Pete taught me tuning, carburetor work, engine timing, gaskets, fuel, systems, etc. I learned which fuels are better in which engines, because of the density and fuel stabilization. I also learned all the additives to fuel for stabilizing other additives.

Eventually I got a garden tractor. It did not run. Pete and I tried many things to get it running. Over time we figured out that it all came down to the fuel. One afternoon we decided to drain the entire fuel system. We first took out the gas tank and emptied it into a can. Out came a bunch of rotting fuel chemicals and more. Next, we blew out the fuel lines and the carburetor with a hose. Then we put everything back on and filled it with fuel and cranked the engine over. Finally, the tractor started up. It was and is my strongest vehicle. I can do anything with it.

So, after a long journey, I have yet to learn many topics and skills. I've made myself a little shop out of a shed that my grandparents weren't using anymore. I'm calling it Dragon Works.

2020 Turley Election Policy

This newspaper will print free self-submitted statements of candidacy only four weeks or more out from the election. All candidates running in both contested and uncontested races are asked to submit their statements to the editor to include only biographical and campaign platform details. Total word count for statements is limited to between 300-500 words maximum. Please include a photo. We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives. We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

Letters to the editor of no more than 250 words from supporters endorsing specific candidates or discussing campaign issues are limited to three total per author during the election season. No election letters will appear in the final edition before the election. We reserve the right to edit all statements of candidacy and letters to the editor to meet our guidelines.

Turley Publications Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the editor should be 350 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources. Send letters to: Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005 or via email to edowner@turley.com. The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon.

BARRE GAZETTE

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Serenity Hill Sampler

by Jane McCauley

We are in very serious times and hopefully all the readers are doing their part in staying home, when possible and staying away from crowds. It is especially important to the senior population.

Watching television we see so many helping with projects and making supplies and feeding the needy but there are also some that are not doing their part and it scares me.

Making meals that go a long way is a way that I am providing my family. Here is one that is easy to do.

CHICKEN IN WINE

3 chicken breasts
3 tablespoons flour
1 can condensed soup
1 can mushroom or fresh mushrooms

1 teaspoon salt
1 cup sour cream
1 cup white wine
1 teaspoon paprika

Place chicken in 9 by 12 inch baking dish. Sprinkle with salt. Combine flour, sour cream, soup and wine in bowl and mix until smooth. Pour over the chicken. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 1/2 hours. Cover with foil the first hour. Serves 6.

Note: Because there are only two of us this will serve at least three meals. It will heat up very well.

This and that

The yard is slowly getting cleaned up after the winter, but I only can work raking for so many loads of leaves before I have to come in and rest and lay down and read. Reading is a good pastime in this time of emergency.

The biggest problem I can see right now is if you are supposed to stay home how are you to get your medicines and groceries that you need. There are some grocery stores that are delivering groceries but what about medicines? A kind neighbor called me to ask if their teen son, who just got his driving license, would like to do any errands for us, but should he? It is hard to know what to do. The television people say to go out and get fresh air but they should say also stay away from crowds.

The division of fisheries and game stocked Comet Pond. There were lots of cars in the parking lot down there. That is not staying away from crowds.

Everyone needs to do their part in this pandemic. Stay safe and stay home if possible.

Hannaford Supermarkets donates to area food banks

REGION – Hannaford Supermarkets announced its commitment to donate \$250,000 to support area food banks that are experiencing increasing and unprecedented demand during the widening of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The monies will be distributed to food banks in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and New York.

Additionally, Hannaford is kicking off a register and store kiosk donation program at all Hannaford grocery stores that

will make it easy for customers to donate toward hunger relief. Customers can donate to their community’s local food bank at the register with a \$5 or \$10 donation or with a cash donation at a kiosk located at the front of the store. “During these times of uncertainty, it’s important that we all pull together to help one another,” said Mike Vail, President of Hannaford. “Hannaford has a long tradition of nourishing communities and this donation is just one way that we can help extend

that care to those who need it the most.”

To make a donation directly to the Worcester County Food Bank, people may go to <https://foodbank.org/2020/03/covid-19-updates/>.

Hannaford Supermarkets, based in Scarborough, Maine, operates 182 stores in the Northeast. Stores are located in Maine, New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Hannaford employs more than 26,000 associates. Additional information can be found at Hannaford.com.

FOOD PANTRY, continued from page 1

increases and decreases as the larger economy rises and falls; but seems never to go away. It remains vital that the area have a food pantry to provide an avenue for local residents to reach out to help those in need of help and for those in need of assistance to receive it.”

For years the food pantry would offer their distribution on the second Wednesday morning of the month, but over time realized for those who worked during the day, getting there was problematic. Last spring the board decided to add an additional distribution time and coordinated it with the church’s community dinner they hold every third Thursday evening of the month.

Longtime food pantry board member Sonja Blaney explained that Thursday has been typically their lighter day, as they distribute to an average of about 80 families on a Wednesday morning.

“It had been slowing down, especially last month, we were thinking of changing the distribution, but then all this happened,” said Blaney regarding the pandemic.

Blaney explained the pantry receives large amounts of non-perishable foods, as well as meats and dairy. Volunteers fill bags with a variety of staple items, each bag worth approximately \$150 and distributes one to each family. Those with six or more members of a family receive two bags.

A recent hope for Blaney was to get more farmers and others involved

so the pantry could offer more fresh fruits and vegetables, better qualities of meats and less processed food products.

And before social distancing started, the pantry was just starting to offer the clients options to fill their own bag with foods that worked best for their families.

“As much as we get in, we try to move out,” said Blaney about the donations.

Volunteer and president of the food pantry, Dave Petrovick, shared the bulk of the food comes from the Worcester County Food Bank, as they are supported by the Mass. Emergency Feeding Assistance Program (MEFAP). Other local organizations have also made substantial contributions from annual food drives they hold including the Barre Lions’s Club, the Woods Memorial Library, the Barre Sportsmen Club, the Barre Congregational Church and many others.

Each month a report to authenticate the work is completed, as the state looks for the number of people serviced that live in particular zip codes, ages, and sources of income a client receives. No clients’ names are ever shared on these documents.

Although the pantry serves to residents of Barre, Oakham, New Braintree and Wheelwright, no one is ever turned away in an emergency.

“If they come and need it, they get it,” Blaney said. “It’s not easy for people to come. We’re all in this together. There are so many good people that volunteer and that we help.”

“We are anticipating larger num-

ber of clients than we have ever seen before, considering people are having to stay home, children are out of school and some people are losing their jobs,” added Radlo.

Several of the volunteers shared the appreciative feedback and thanks they receive from the clients for their help, some who volunteer while receiving services because they want to give back.

“I have volunteered for the food

pantry for thirteen years because I

know that I am helping people in my

community who are in need of help,”

Radlo said. “It feels good. Each distribution feels productive and useful.

If I were in need, I would hope someone was there to help me.”

In the past Radlo and the rest of the group would have eagerly welcomed anyone who would want to volunteer. Currently the pantry is keeping the volunteer staff at a minimum, playing their part in avoiding the spreading of the virus.

However, those who can help, food and monetary donations will always be accepted and at this time very much needed.

The next scheduled distribution date, Wednesday, April 8 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Barre Congregational Church, will most likely be a drive-thru service.

Please feel free to call Chuck with any questions at 978-355-6463, visit the pantry website at <http://barre-foodbank.org/> or visit the Barre Food Pantry facebook page. Monetary donations may be sent to the Barre Food Pantry, P.O. Box 264, Barre, MA 01005.

office not the school.

Jefts said there needed to be more trees. He was told as many trees as possible would remain. Town Center Committee member, Alicia Muck, said that construction by the Hubbardston Center School should possibly be done when school was not in session.

Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us.

PAST PAGES, continued from page 4

observance of his 72nd birthday March 21 with about 35 relatives and friends attending. The party was given by his children, nieces and nephews. A birthday cake decorated with yellow roses was made by Anni Kauppinen. A large variety of homemade dishes graced the buffet table. The event was held at the home of this daughter and her family, Elaine Suojanen of Ragged Hill Road.

Norma Neylon, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Neylon, Jr., North Brookfield Road, graduated from the Professional Modeling course at the John Robert Powers School of Modeling last Saturday.

Compost in the making

We have all been spending a lot of time at home, and for good reason. It feels great to get caught up on all of the tasks around the house that have been put on the back burner. One of those jobs that I’ve been dreading is cleaning out the chicken coop. But alas, this past Saturday my oldest daughter and I got the job done. When faced with the challenge of what to do with the spent hay we had the perfect solution: start a compost pile!

It’s easier than you might think to make your own compost. Most of us have an adequate amount of kitchen scraps and yard waste on hand to generate enough for a small garden. There are numerous books on the subject that go into amazing detail on what to include and what not to include in your compost pile. Simply speaking, your goal is to combine nitrogen-rich ingredients and carbon-rich ingredients together so that they decompose to form compost.

Think of yard waste and garden debris in terms of “green” for nitrogen and “brown” for carbon. Grass clippings, kitchen waste and freshly fallen leaves and weed plants (none with seeds, please) are considered green, whereas pine needles, dried corn stalks and dried leaves are in the brown category. Make alternating layers of these ingredients to form a pile at least three feet tall by three feet

wide. Add a shovel full of finished compost or garden soil to the pile every now and then to inoculate it with beneficial bacteria and fungi.

Once you have completed the layering process you can either let it sit a year until next spring, called “lazy man’s compost,” or tend to it on a regular basis and end up with the finished product in a couple of months or less. This will involve watching the pile’s temperature and turning it when temperatures drop so that it heats up again and again until decomposition is complete. At this stage, it should be dark in color and crumbly in texture and have an earthy, inoffensive odor.

An annual addition of compost does wonders for the garden. Not only are you increasing its fertility, you are improving its structure. If your soil is on the sandy side, compost works to bind aggregates together to hold more moisture. Amazingly enough, it has the opposite effect on soils with a high clay content; they are better able to drain thanks to compost. There is even some evidence that plant diseases are reduced by its integration into the soil.

Most experts agree that for an established garden, one-half to



one inch of compost spread on the surface and mixed into the top few inches of soil, is all that is necessary to maintain status quo. I’ve had good luck incorporating a shovel full of compost, a sprinkling of lime and balanced organic fertilizer into the planting hole for most vegetable transplants.

Generally they require no additional fertilizers for the remainder of the growing season. For vegetables sown in place in the garden, just mix those same ingredients into the top couple of inches of soil prior to planting your seeds. Even perennial borders and shrub beds benefit from an application of compost. If you don’t have the time to scratch it into the soil, simply apply it to the surface around your plants and let the earthworms do the work for you!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

National Grid temporarily suspends collection related activities

WALTHAM – National Grid has temporarily suspended collections-related activities, including service disconnections, to lessen any financial hardship the COVID-19 pandemic may have on its customers. The decision is part of the company’s pandemic preparedness plan, which is designed to mitigate the impact the virus has on their customers, workforce and ability to deliver safe, reliable electricity and natural gas to customers.

“We recognize that this pandemic has brought many challenges for our customers and we want to do our part to lessen any financial impact they may face as the result of the outbreak,” said Badar Khan, National Grid’s interim U.S. President. “We are committed to our customers’ well-being during this difficult time.” The company’s decision to temporarily suspend service terminations and collections-related activities is effective immediately.

The company also has implemented the following employee-related actions, which will remain in place as it continue to closely monitor the pandemic:

Limiting external meeting attendance and external visitors at National Grid facilities to operationally critical activities that are required to deliver gas and electricity to our customers.

Restricting travel between National Grid office locations, except for operationally critical activities.

Stopping all international business-related travel.

Elevating the level of cleaning and disinfecting at all company facilities.

“Ensuring the health and safety of our employees and customers is our number one priority,” Khan said. “We have a comprehensive emergency response plan in place to keep the lights on and the gas flowing for our customers. Our pandemic team is meeting daily

and we’re closely monitoring all developments associated with this evolving and complex virus.”

Khan noted that the company also is sharing its preparedness plans with regulators, federal, state and local officials, emergency response organizations, customers and other key stakeholders.

“We will continue to closely monitor this situation, review and adjust our policies and ways of working as necessary, and will keep the lines of communications open with our employees, customers and all stakeholders,” he said.

National Grid (NYSE: NGG) is an electricity, natural gas, and clean energy delivery company serving more than 20 million people through its networks in New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. For more information, people may visit their website, follow them on Twitter, watch on YouTube, friend them on Facebook, and find their photos on Instagram.

USDA announces ACEP application deadline

AMHERST – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications from state and local governments, non-governmental organizations and Native American Tribes that would like to protect working farmland through an Agricultural Land Easement under the federal Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

ACEP agricultural land easements protect critical natural resources and encourage private landowners to maintain land for farming through the voluntary sale of an easement, which limits future development.

NRCS provides financial assistance to eligible partners for purchasing Agricultural Land Easements. Cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland and industrial private forest land private forestland are eligible. State and local governments, non-governmental organizations and Native American

Tribes that have farmland or grassland protection programs are eligible to partner with NRCS to purchase conservation easements.

This year’s application ranking date is Friday, April 17. All eligible applications received by 4 p.m. on this date will be ranked. The highest ranked applications will be selected based on the available funds provide to Massachusetts NRCS.

To apply, applications should be submitted to Helen Castles, USDA-NRCS Massachusetts State Office, 451 West St., Amherst, MA 01002 by Friday, April 17. Information on how to apply and application forms are available on the NRCS Massachusetts website. “USDA is committed to preserving our agricultural lands for the future generations. This is a perfect opportunity for local communities, state agencies, land trusts and other eligible groups to partner with NRCS to preserve these lands and the values they provide to the

residents of Massachusetts,” said Dan Wright, Massachusetts State Conservationist for NRCS.

NRCS may contribute up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement. Where NRCS determines that grasslands of special environmental significance will be protected, NRCS may contribute up to 75 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement.

To learn about ACEP and other technical and financial assistance available through NRCS conservation programs, people may visit www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov or the local USDA Service Center.

NRCS is a federal agency that works hand-in-hand with the people of Massachusetts to improve and protect soil, water and other natural resources. The agency works with local conservation districts and other partners to serve farmers and landowners in the Bay State and across the United States.

MASSDOT, continued from page 1

Transportation Improvement Project (TIP). The original project was to extend from Elm Street to Williamsville Road and later the scope extended to Curtis Recreation Field, a total distance of 4,000 feet.

The design called for road reclamation, American Disability Act (ADA) compliant sidewalks and drainage for the section of Rte. 68 from Williamsville Road to Curtis Recreation Field. The Williamsville Road intersection would change to a right angle for better visibility and have a wide pedestrian crossing. It also included the installation of a warning beacon at the recreation field. Other features included vertical granite curbing, five-foot sidewalks and a shared use bicycle and pedestrian 10 foot path.

The portion of Rte. 68 south of Williamsville Road required a full depth pavement reconstruction as well as a parking lane by the town offices and a warning beacon at the school. The design eliminated the crosswalk by the U.S. Post Office as the two crosswalks were near to each other. The sidewalks through the town center would be seven-feet wide and five-feet for the other sections. The High Street intersection will be a right angle to Rte. 68 – the

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Where is this?



Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer

This week’s mystery photo is from North Brookfield. If any readers know where this photo was taken, they may email edowner@turley.com or call the Barre Gazette at 413-967-3505, extension 100 with their answer by noon on Monday, March 30. The names of those that correctly guessed the location will appear in next week’s edition. Dick Clark correctly identified last week’s photo. Last week’s photo was the sign by the New Braintree Congregational Church in the center of New Braintree.

National Grid commits \$500,000 to assist families impacted by COVID-19

National Grid is directing \$500,000 to support customers affected by the health impacts, financial hardships and disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding will provide immediate relief to families and individuals in need and bolster efforts by local organizations to assist communities across Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island.

“We are committed to helping our customers through the difficult times and uncharted challenges associated with this pandemic,” said Badar Khan, National Grid’s interim U.S. President. “We recognize this is an unprecedented and rapidly changing situation. We want to do our part to look out for our customers and protect the communities where we live and serve.”

A portion of the funds will be dedicated directly to National Grid’s customers experiencing financial hardship. The company will also work with community-based organizations and funds to help support many of the basic needs being interrupted. The following represents a

sampling of some of the programs and funds that will be targeted: the United Way Rhode Island Crisis Fund, the Rhode Island Good Neighbor Energy Fund Boston Resiliency Fund, the United Way of Central MA “We Care Fund,” Island Harvest on Long Island and the United Way and other organizations across the New York footprint.

In addition, National Grid has taken the following steps to further protect the safety and well-being of our customers and employees: Suspending collections-related activities, including service disconnections, to lessen any financial hardship the COVID-19 pandemic may have on customers Encouraging customers who are struggling to pay their National Grid bill to contact the company as soon as possible for assistance.

Offering the expertise of our Consumer Advocates, who provide crisis intervention support for customers in need, working closely with state and county Social Services and community assistance organizations.

Requiring our employees to take precautionary measures before entering a customer’s home to limit exposure to our customers and our workforce.

“Ensuring the health and safety of our employees and customers is our number one priority,” Khan said. “We have a comprehensive emergency response plan in place to keep the lights on and the gas flowing for our customers. Our pandemic team is meeting daily and we’re closely monitoring all developments associated with this evolving and complex situation.”

Khan noted that the company also is sharing its preparedness plans with regulators, federal, state and local officials, emergency response organizations, customers and other key stakeholders. Additional information on National Grid’s pandemic preparedness and a customer Q&A can be found at ngrid.com/covid-19.

“We will continue to closely monitor our customers’ needs during the pandemic and find new ways to assist where we can,” Khan said.

Country Bank donates \$250,000 to four local hospitals

WARE – Country Bank announced it donated \$250,000 to four local hospitals to help assist with the work they are doing for their patients as they fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The hospitals receiving donations include Baystate Health in Springfield, Harrington Hospital in Southbridge, UMass Memorial and Saint Vincent Hospital, both in Worcester.

“We are so grateful to Country Bank for its most generous support and appreciate its continued partnership during this

unprecedented time. This gift will directly support resources needed at Baystate Health as we continue to address and prepare for the care our community needs as we face this worldwide pandemic,” stated Scott Berg, vice president of philanthropy, Baystate Health and executive Director, Baystate Health Foundation.

“These are challenging and ever-evolving times as we face uncertainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. As a community partner, we care deeply

about our communities, and we wanted to support our local hospitals to help ease their financial burden as they continue to offer exceptional care to our friends and neighbors in the region,” stated Paul Scully, president, and CEO at Country Bank.

Country Bank is a full-service mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton and Worcester.

NBES, continued from page 7

ing was implemented during the Spring of 2017, scores from the ELA portion of the test improved from 26 percent of the students meeting or exceeding expectations, to 43 percent meeting or exceeding expectations in Spring of 2019.

Not to mention the many literacy programs offered throughout the year during the school days and in the evenings including book fairs, a Not So Spooky Story night in the fall for families, Camp Read A Lot, held on the day before February vacation with the focus on literacy and the love of reading and an evening in June kicking off Summer Reading, where families can “shop” for books for free at the school, with the intention of building home libraries that can be utilized during summer vacation.

“I was so excited when the school was nominated and thrilled for them to win,” said Tucker. “I wasn’t at all surprised though. For me personally, it has been amazing to watch the staff create this dedication and love of literacy – a culture of literacy – for the kids.”

During Tucker’s time as NBES PTO President back in 2014, the need for improvement in the overall reading program was apparent,



Student Ayden Marsh shows off his finds at the annual NBES Summer Reading Kick Off last year.



Turley Publications Submitted Photo NBES student Marley-Rae Shea-Shepherd shares her love of reading with a favorite book.

as she helped to lead the charge with the donation of thousands of dollars from the PTO and from the Boxtops program to buy books and to help support the creation of a bookroom.

“It made such a difference,” explained Tucker about the new literacy room for the students. “I am inspired by the staff and administrators that I have worked with and I am so very proud of what they accomplish every day. I am grate-

ful my kids have the opportunity to learn from them.”

Priestley and the rest of the staff at NBES will no doubt stay committed in providing a strong reading program to their students, as the recent award validated their efforts and hard work.

“Reading is the foundation for all learning,” concluded Priestley. “The ability to read, to read actively and to read critically are crucial skills for success in today’s world.”

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Kemp makes New England wrestling championships

By Karen A. Lewis
Sports Correspondent

BARRE - It was an extended season for Quabbin wrestler Tristan Kemp as he competed in four post season tournaments, placing in all of them.

"Tristan had a great showing at the end of the year and fought hard to place so high," said Quabbin wrestling coach Mike Adams.

Leading off with a first at Sectionals, the heavy weight continued his winning ways with a first in the Division 3 States. In the larger pool of wrestlers at All-States, Kemp earned a third-place medal and rounded out his season at the New England Meet with a fourth place showing.

"It's a hard question to answer if I'm happy with how my season went, because everyone wants to get first at every tournament," said Kemp, a junior who will be back for one more year of high school wrestling. "I think I did well, but at the same time I'm not content with the results."

Kemp's drive to always get better is not only limited to wrestling season.

"He trains very hard throughout the year and also in the off season," Adams said. "He is a wrestler who does not only push himself during the season, but also puts in the work out of season in order to be the best he can be when it comes time to the season. He plays other sports, which allows him to compete, which essentially makes him a better athlete when it comes to wrestling season."

During the New England Meet, facing all of the toughest heavyweight wrestlers throughout the six states, Kemp swept all three matches the first day of the tournament, defeating New Hampshire's third, Maine's first and the Rhode Island first, to make it to the semifinals.

On the second day of the tournament,



Photos by Ray Duffy

Tristan Kemp works to pin an opponent at the All States Meet.

Kemp fell in a tight match to MA's second-place finisher. In the consolation semifinals, he wrestled and pinned the Massachusetts champion. In the final match to determine third place in the tournament, Kemp had a rematch with Rhode Island first, but unfortunately didn't fare as well as he did in their initial match and fell to his opponent, but still earned the fourth-place berth.

"Tristan is a great athlete, has a great work ethic and determination in order to get better," stated Adams. "He is exactly what a coach wants in terms of work ethic when it comes to improving themselves and wanting to perform at their best. He is a very coachable athlete which is sometimes hard to find in high school athletes."

Plans are currently up in the air for the upcoming national tournament, where Kemp had already earned the All-American status twice when he placed in the top eight the both years he participated.

"Depending on how this year goes and if the tournament runs, Tristan plans on placing this year, hopefully improving his seventh-place finish from last year," said Adams.

Aside from Kemp, several other Quabbin wrestlers saw beyond the regular season when they competed in the Sectional tournament. Panther Cole Wilson earned a fifth-place spot and was an alternate at the Division 3 States.

See KEMP, page 8



Panther Tristan Kemp looks for the match win at the All States Meet.



A congratulatory hug is given to Quabbin heavyweight Tristan Kemp by his coach Mike Adams at the All States Meet recently.

Spring sports postponed to April 27

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

Following the first postponement of spring sports, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association made a subsequent vote to further delay the start of the spring sports to April 27.

The original start date of spring sports was March 16. It was delayed to March 30 when many schools began cancelling classes for two weeks due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The MIAA's Board of Directors were scheduled to meet again by teleconference this week to continue to monitor the situation. However, the March 20 teleconference revealed some decisions that became necessary by the continued postponement of spring sports.

The MIAA has agreed to only hold a postseason tournament is spring sports begins on April 27. If the MIAA has to make another postponement, then the tournaments in all spring sports will be cancelled and high schools will only play a modified schedule.

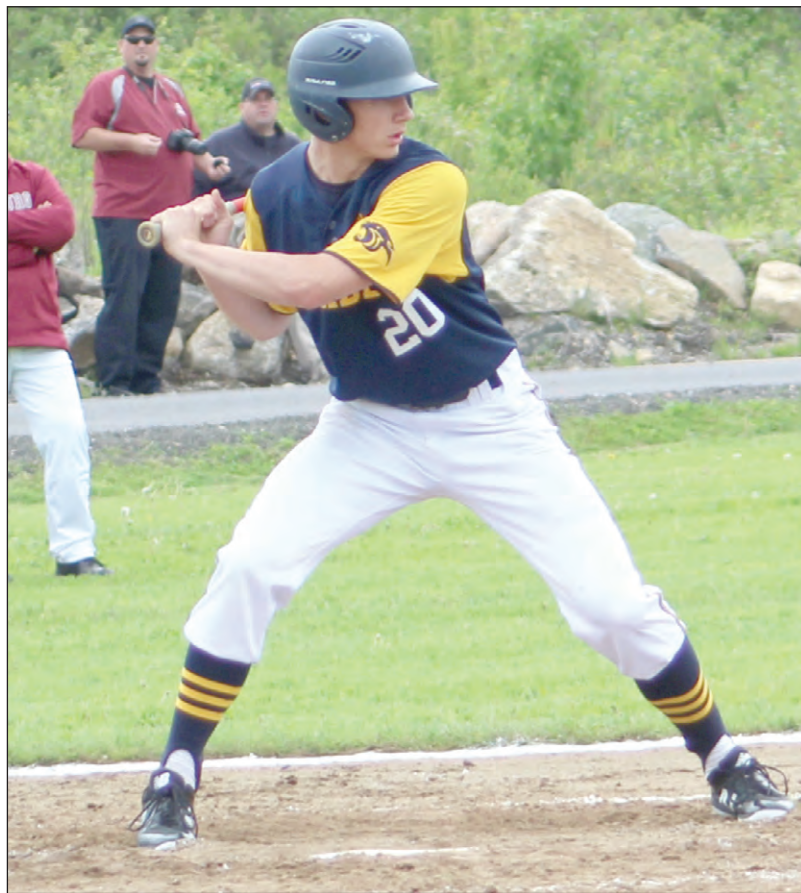
Additionally, there will not be any exceptions made to Rule 34, which dictates how many contests a team can have in a given week.

Depending on the sport, the number of competitions in a week can range from two to four. It modifies in the events makeups are held, such as in the case of baseball or softball.

The board also voted unani-

See SPRING SPORTS, page 8

Pitcher Jenkins set to play at NJIT



Photos by Karen A. Lewis

Quabbin's Croix Jenkins gets ready to swing during a varsity game last year.

By Karen A. Lewis
Sports Correspondent

BARRE - Great things are on the horizon for Quabbin senior Croix Jenkins, who just completed a successful season of basketball and recently signed his letter of intent to play Division I baseball at New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), to study mechanical engineering at the honors college.

A well-rounded athlete, baseball was to be the sport that could propel Jenkins to play beyond high school.

"I have played most positions, but currently I am a pitcher and outfielder, I used to be a catcher and third basemen," said Jenkins. "Pitching is my favorite, I love the constant reoccurring match ups between a batter and a pitcher, and

honestly the satisfaction of striking a kid out is one of the greatest feelings."

Quabbin varsity baseball coach Chris Robidoux knew of Jenkins in the middle school — his son Tony and Jenkins are in the same grade and have been teammates.

"I saw Croix had potential as a pitcher very early on, so I had a conversation with him about giving up catching in order to have less wear and tear on his arm," commented Robidoux. "If you watch Croix throw a baseball, it is a very unorthodox style. Being a former pitcher myself and around the game for a long time, I couldn't think of anyone I had seen or played with, that threw the ball with this style."

Robidoux had no intention of altering Jenkins' style, instead he



Panther Croix Jenkins releases a pitch from the mound in a game last spring.



Submitted Photo

Panther Croix Jenkins gets ready to release a pitch from the mound in a game last spring.

worked with the young pitcher, focusing on little things to enable him to be able to throw more strikes.

"Croix has always been very coachable, even though he had tremendous success in the past," Robidoux said. "He was open to and understood that he needed to improve and push himself to be successful at the higher level of varsity baseball."

As a freshman on the vari-

ty team, Jenkins used that year to learn and improve, resulting in impressive seasons on the mound for his sophomore and junior years.

"Last year's playoff game against Barlett was one of the best pitched games I've ever seen at the high school level," noted Robidoux about Jenkins. "A complete game on 71 pitches, throwing 62 for strikes, and completely dominating

See JENKINS, page 8

Senior softball league seeks to start season



Submitted photos

The Western Mass. Relics, a senior softball league, play during last season. The softball league is still planning to begin play on April 25 amid coronavirus concerns.

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION - While many are hunkering down trying to wait out the coronavirus pandemic that was crippled regular life, and especially the sports world with no competitions of any kind due to the edict from state and federal officials barring gatherings of 25 people or more.

But the Western Mass. Relics, a softball league for senior citizens, is still planning to hold its season-opening jamboree on April 25.

Steve Lepow, the public relations director for the league, says the league has begun booking its field for play, and the Ludlow-based league, which draws players from all over the region and into Connecticut, claims the field will be available come the start of the season.

"We lease the softball field from Fish and Game and we met the owner and posed the question about having to delay the start



of the season," Lepow said. "He assured us the softball field will be available to us even if the bar is closed because of the coronavirus."

The season starts on April 25 with a jamboree of modified games with the regular season beginning on April 27.

"Full games are supposed to happen on April 27," said Lepow. "We play seven inning games with two divisions. The silver division is for 50 to 65-year-olds and the gold division is for ages 65 and older. Our oldest player is

See SENIOR SOFTBALL, page 8

Sports

Thompson Speedway reschedules events, Icebreaker event moved to May

THOMPSON, Conn. -- After conversations with all stakeholders, Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park announced on Tuesday the new date for the 46th annual Liquid Death Icebreaker weekend. The prestigious event is now tentatively set to take place May 15 and 16, including the headlining NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Death To Plastic 150. Due to the current COVID-19 outbreak, the date is tentative, as the situation is fluid and

changes are occurring across the motorsports industry daily. A full schedule for the event will be released once available. The original date for the Liquid Death Icebreaker, April 3 to 5, was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, but Thompson Speedway officials were committed to finding the right date and releasing it to the public as quickly as possible. "After working with all of the different parties involved, we feel this is the best week-

end to run the Icebreaker and kick-off the Thompson racing season," Terry Eames, the General Manager of Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park, said. "Just like the entire racing community, we are disappointed that we can't start the race season as originally scheduled. However, we will continue to abide by our Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont's Executive Orders and CDC suggestions during this time. We fully expect to begin the season

with the Icebreaker, May 15-16, and look forward to seeing everyone back at the track soon." The health of our valued race teams, fans, staff and customers is paramount during the COVID-19 outbreak. We have cleaned the property thoroughly to do our part to stop the spread of the virus and will continue to do so in the future. For more information on Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park, visit thompsonspeedway.com and follow the track on social media.

KEMP, continued from page 7

Sophomore C.J. Podkowka also did well by placing fourth and was one match away from placing eighth at the D3 States. Quabbin junior Kenny Stolgitis finished off his season with a second-place finish at Sectionals and an eighth at D3 States. "Although Kenny did not qualify for All-States, he had a great showing and proved to be very impressive at the end of the year," Adams said.

Between a successful camp for the younger kids and the excitement that was generated this year during the regular season, Adams has positive thoughts for the future of the program. "I hope to see more athletes come out for wrestling," said Adams. "I do believe we will be able to find a few more and will see much more from the youth camp as they get older. I am excited to see some of those young athletes come through and look forward to coaching at Quabbin for a long time."

JENKINS, continued from page 7

his competition." As Jenkins was scouted for NJIT, according to Robidoux it was easy to see why any college would want him as part of their program. "Croix's size, work ethic and ability were very attractive to college coaches, but what may have separated him from other recruits is his academic success and being an all-around great person," stressed Robidoux. "Croix is a great teammate and leader. He leads by being out on the field early, being focused on what we are doing and working extremely hard. The other guys watch him and do the same. They also know when Croix is pitching, we have a chance to beat any team we play." Jenkins certainly put his time into baseball during his younger years, climbing the ranks in t-ball through little league, all stars, Babe Ruth, travel teams and Evolution Baseball (a club program), as well as Quabbin middle and high school teams.

Jenkins' mother also stressed the significance academics plays in the athlete's overall picture. "Academics is so important, it really is what allows doors to open," Nehr Jenkins said. "The best athletic program in the world, if it isn't connected to the college that provides the academic program that interests your child, it isn't worth looking at." In an interesting twist of fate, NJIT pitching coach Anthony Deleo, a Quabbin alum, heard about Jenkins from his family still in the area and decided to check him out. And in turn Jenkins was able to check out NJIT and liked what he saw.

Valley Wheel Baseball looking for new players

REGION – The Valley Wheel Over-30 Baseball League is seeking new players for the upcoming 2020 season, which is set to begin near the end of April. The league is seeking players ages 28 and up. Players turning 28 this year are eligible. However, only players 30 and older can pitch. The league plays 15 regular season games with games being held mostly on Sundays with a couple of weekday games thrown in the mix as well as a special Mother's Day Saturday game in early May.

The league is built on comradery, fair play, and having a good time with friends. If interested in trying out, go to www.valleywheelbaseball.com. The rules of the league and new player forms can be found on the site. For further information, you can contact the league's commissioner, Jim Nason at wheel12@comcast.net or call him at (413) 433-4308. Tryouts will be taking place in the early weeks of April, weather permitting, with a draft following the tryouts.

Sign-ups ongoing for Quabbin League

REGION – The Quabbin Valley Over-30 Baseball League is seeking new players for 2020 season. The league has six teams, several with open roster spots. Last year, the league voted to allow players age 28 and 29 to be able to join the league, though players under 30 are not eligible to pitch. The cost of the league this season is \$192. For players new to the league, there will be a workout held in early April prior to the league's annual draft. Players

will have an opportunity to showcase their skills before being selected to a team for the season. The season is 15 regular season games plus at least one playoff game. Games are nine innings and metal (BBCOR -3) or wood bats are allowed. Fields locations are throughout Western Mass. For more information on the league, or if you are interested in registering, go to https://www.quabbinvalley-baseball.org/. The league is also in Facebook.

SPRING SPORTS, continued from page 7

mously to waive the 10-practice rule before competition can happen. The board voted to make it seven calendars from the start of practices. The maximum number of competitions was also modified to 12 for most sports for tournament participation. A team must have at least eight contests for postseason participation. A typical baseball or softball schedule is normally 18 to 20 games, while lacrosse and volley-

ball compete in 16 to 18 contests. According to the board of directors, there is a movement to try and keep student-athletes from missing their senior season, especially after the state tournament was interrupted for basketball and hockey. "Based on the charge from the BOD to have a spring sport season start date of April 27," the board minutes state. "Discussion regarding a timeline for post-season play took place. The Tournament Management Committee is committed to allow for broad participation at all levels this spring. Keeping student-athletes con-

nected, involved and engaged has meaning and purpose after the challenges that were faced at the end of the winter season and spring sports in general." School districts across the state have been ordered closed through April 7. That order was made by Gov. Charlie Baker. Baker has not made a decision or set a deadline to revisit that closure and whether or not to extend it. The MIAA has posted a fluid document on its website answering questions about the current situation. The document is considered fluid and is updated when new

developments occur. The MIAA has specifically stated that no sports can be practice or played prior to April 27. Additionally, coaches unable to interact with their players before that date. The MIAA plans to provide guidance on health and safety guidelines for spring sports if there are still concerns about the coronavirus when schools resume competition. The board was scheduled to meet Tuesday morning with an update to be publish after that meeting.

SENIOR SOFTBALL, continued from page 7

89-years-old." The purpose of the league is to have fun and build friendships. Lepow said regardless of where the pandemic stands, the league does plan to forego typical hand-shaking lines post game.

"We will eliminate hand-shaking lines after the game and fist bumps," said Lepow. "We have safety rules to prevent contact such as two first base bags (orange for the runner and white for the fielder. We also have a screen for the pitchers circle to protect the pitcher." Lepow says player safety will

be a top concern. "Safety is our number one concern," said Lepow. In addition to the things to the hand-shaking, we are asking any player who is sick not to come. We are also providing wipes or other sanitizers to use on bats. On our website we have information constantly being added to keep players advised on what we

are doing to ensure safety." The commissioner of the league recently emailed players asking them to use common sense and announce that the season is still on. The league's only opposition could come at the local, state, or federal level if the games are not exempted from the gathering restrictions that have been made.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. As soon as possible

5. Gateway (Arabic)

8. Doctors' group

11. Madder genus of plants

13. A team's best pitcher

14. Ancient Greek sophist

15. Go up

16. Neither

17. Bolivian river

18. Manila hemp

20. Comedienne Gasteyer

21. British School

22. Human reproductive organs

25. Surrenders

30. Dog with long, silky coat and drooping ears

31. Sun up in New York

32. Lead alloy

33. Eastern Asian plant

38. Rapid deployment force (abbr.)

41. Japanese warrior

43. Festivity

45. Interruptions

47. Nonsense (slang)

49. Data mining methodology (abbr.)

50. Calvary sword

55. French river

56. Global business conference (abbr.)

57. Afflicted

59. Con man's game

60. No (Scottish)

61. Jewish spiritual leader

62. Fish

63. Camera term (abbr.)

64. Impudence

67. Dark brown or black

CLUES DOWN

1. A continuous portion of a circle

2. Genus of seabirds

3. Infant's dining accessory

4. Native Americans from Arizona

5. Popular fruit

6. Poisonous plant

7. Scolded

8. Assists

9. Hand (Spanish)

10. Amazon product identifying system (abbr.)

12. Basics

14. Cain and __

19. Malaria

23. Indicates particular shape

24. Respiratory disease

25. Central Standard Time

26. Imitate

27. Golf score

28. A place to lay your head

29. Three cards of the same suit

34. Not in

35. Human gene

36. Ancient Chinese philosophic concept

37. French river

39. Thinks up

40. Type of geological deposit

41. Helps little firms

42. Area units

44. A device to remove

45. Secret political clique

46. Polite interruption sound

47. Foundation

48. Clare Boothe __, American writer

51. Swiss river

52. Prejudice

53. Actor Idris

54. Resistance fighters

58. Speak disrespectfully of

Send your sports stories and photos to gscibelli@turley.com

The benefits of local newspapers

Local newspapers play vital roles in communities across the globe. The Information Age has changed the way many people get their news, but local newspapers continue to serve as valuable resources for readers interested in learning more about and becoming more involved in their communities.

While local publishers continue to adapt to the changes brought about by technology, the following are a handful of benefits unique to local newspapers.

Local newspapers keep readers up-to-date on their own communities. Globalization may be here to stay, but that does not mean local communities are no longer home to newsworthy events. National and international newspapers and 24-hour cable news channels can keep men and women up-to-date on national and world news, but in many instances, local newspapers are the only means people have to learn about what's going on in their own communities. Local politics impact residents' lives every day, and local newspapers cover local politics extensively.

Local newspapers benefit nearby businesses. Small business owners often connect with community members via local newspapers. A strong, locally based small business community can improve economies in myriad ways, creating jobs in the community and contributing tax dollars that can be used to strengthen local schools and infrastructure. And local newspapers do their part by providing affordable and effective advertising space to local business owners looking to connect with their communities.

Local newspapers can strengthen communities. Local newspapers are great resources for residents who want to become more active in their communities and learn more about community events. Local newspapers often showcase community events like carnivals, local theater productions and projects like park cleanups. These are great ways for readers to become more active in their communities and build stronger communities as a result.

Local newspapers can benefit children. National newspapers may have



little age-appropriate content to offer young children, but local newspapers tend to include more soft news items than national periodicals, and such stories typically are appropriate for young readers. According to Newspapers in Education, students who participated in an NIE group in Florida performed significantly better in spelling and vocabulary

than nonreaders. Additional studies have indicated that students who use newspapers in the classroom perform better on standardized reading tests than those who do not use newspapers in class.

Many local newspapers have played vital roles in their communities for decades, providing a go-to resource for local readers and business owners.

13 Weekly Newspapers Serving The Local Communities

Agawam Advertiser News • Barre Gazette • Chicopee Register • Country Journal

Journal Register • Quaboag Current • The Register • Sentinel • The Sun

Town Reminder • Ware River News • Wilbraham Times • Shopping Guide

800.824.6548 • www.newspapers.turley.com



Education

QCC to transition to remote learning opportunities

WORCESTER – Due to the current and unfolding situation regarding the Coronavirus/COVID-19, Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) has instituted the following safety measures:

Current in-person courses, labs, and clinicals (including in-person meetings of blended/hybrid courses) are being delayed until Monday, March 30 as the College transitions to remote instruction.

Seven-week courses (QCC’s Spring II) that are 100 percent online will begin as scheduled.

New, in-person, seven-week courses scheduled to begin on March 23 will be delayed until Monday, March 30, as they are reformatted to remote instruction.

Additional strategies such as facilitating access to Internet and online services, the QCC Food Pantry and Resource Center, and other student support services are being addressed and new procedures are being adopted. All information will be available to the public as strategies are finalized.

Registration for current QCC students will begin Monday, March 30. Students will receive emailed instructions.

For the latest information and updates, people may visit QCC’s Coronavirus/COVID-19 Information Center at www.qcc.edu/coronavirus.

For more information about QCC, people may contact Josh Martin, director of institutional communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu

HCC to conduct classes remotely

HOLYOKE – To help protect the health and well-being of its students, faculty and staff, Holyoke Community College (HCC) will begin conducting all classes remotely for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester.

The college previously announced that it would extend spring break by one week while suspending in-person classes March 23 to March 27. HCC is prepared to launch remote learning beginning Monday, March 30.

Karin Fredricksen performed in Assumption College production

WORCESTER – Broadway returned to Worcester when Assumption College presented a student-run production of the 2012 Broadway revival of “Godspell” Feb. 28 and 29 at the Jeanne Y. Curtis Performance Hall on campus, 500 Salisbury St.

Karin Fredricksen of Rutland, Class of 2022, was part of the ensemble in the production.

Karin is a data analytics major and a member of Chorale and Music Ministry. Past performances include ensemble roles in “Catch Me If You Can,” “Hello, Dolly!” and “Man of La Mancha.”

Sophea James makes University at Albany dean’s list

ALBANY, N.Y. – The University at Albany announced that Sophea James of Barre made the dean’s list of distinguished students for the fall 2019 semester.

In order to qualify for this distinction, students at the University at Albany must earn a grade point average of 3.25 or higher during their first semester of study. In subsequent semesters of study, students must earn a grade point average of 3.50 or higher.

A comprehensive public research university, the University at Albany offers more than 120 undergraduate majors and minors and 125 master’s, doctoral and graduate certificate programs.

Monty Tech lists SkillsUSA results

FITCHBURG – Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School (Monty Tech) recently held its SkillsUSA’s, local skills and leadership competition at the school. The following are the results: Matt Brouillet, grade 11, technical drafting, DQ; Colby Caban, grade 12, plumbing, bronze; Sophia Howard, grade 10, medical terminology, bronze; Sophia Howard, grade 10, nurse assistant, gold; George Ross III, grade 11, TeamWorks, carpenter and Emma Wilbur, grade 12, advertising design, bronze; all from Barre. Jaden Caron, grade 12, CNC milling, DQ; Ashley

Femino, grade 11, early childhood education, silver; Audrey Forte, grade 10, photography, DQ; Alex Landry, grade 11, cabinetmaking, gold; Alex Landry, grade 11, job skill demonstration-open, silver; Bryan Sweeney, grade 12, TeamWorks, electrician; David Thompson, grade 10, welding, gold; Katie Valois, grade 10, cosmetology (under 500m hours), DQ and Tyler Warner, grade 10, promotional bulletin board, bronze; all from Hubbardston. Top winners qualified to advance to the district- and state-level competitions.

QCC receives Massachusetts Biomedical Initiatives Grant

WORCESTER – Recently Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) students were recognized for their successes that were a result of funding from the Massachusetts Biomedical Initiatives(MBI) Grant. The students were part of a panel at a breakfast event held at Worcester State University (WSU) to thank legislators for their support of the \$250,000 MBI Grant, which was jointly awarded to QCC and WSU.

Lt. Governor Karyn Polito opened the breakfast program extolling the virtues of the Commonwealth’s innovative economy, particularly in the Worcester region. “Under the STEM umbrella, over the next 10 years we expect jobs in this area to grow 13 percent or more, whereas non-STEM jobs are growing at a rate of 9 percent,” she said. “In Massachusetts, employers say they have more jobs than people with skills to fill these jobs.”

While touting the praises of STEM programs in the state, Lt. Governor Polito noted a startling statistic in the Massachusetts STEM workforce - 76 percent of those employed in STEM in the Commonwealth are white. “Clearly this underscores the need to do more,” she said.

At QCC, the student population is close to 50 percent racially and ethnically diverse, with almost 60 percent women.

The college has used part of the MBI Grant funds to institute a student peer assistant program, which is paving the way for more diversity in STEM. QCC’s first student to take part in the fledgling program was student Thi Tran, one of the two QCC students on the discussion panel. Tran is in her final semester of the pre-pharmacy program at QCC and plans to transfer into the doctorate pharmacy program at MCPHS this fall. She immigrated to the United States with her family close to eight years ago, with minimal understanding of the English language. Today, she is in her fourth semester as a student peer assistant.

“I’m able to help other students and reinforce what I learned in the lab,” she said. “It’s helpful to other students and it makes things clearer to me by explaining

things.”

QCC’s other student panelist, Rama Al Shawwa, came to Worcester in 2018 after emigrating from Egypt. A native of Syria, she had been displaced from her homeland before going to Egypt. According to Al Shawwa, she and her family came to this country to get medical treatment for her father. It was watching the doctors at a local hospital that led to her interest in the science field. Al Shawwa said she knew only a small amount of English when she came to Worcester and began taking classes at QCC. She was in need of the extra assistance that a peer student assistant could provide. Tran became her peer assistant. This was a good match for Al Shawwa, who felt Tran could empathize some of the language barriers that she was experiencing. “I was not sure where things were in the lab or how to study. She (Tran) was always there when I needed her. She inspires me to be successful. She taught me how to balance between, school, family and a job,” Al Shawwa said, adding that her dream is to go to either medical or pharmacy school.

“This is what opens the doors for the future generation, particularly new immigrants and minorities that can come and study and inspire each other and mentor each other, so that they can work in a diversified workforce,” said QCC president Dr. Luis Pedraja. “I want to thank all our legislators and the Baker-Polito administration, and Representative Sanchez for all the hard work to bring in this money. We are starting out and I believe we can do it here in Worcester and lead the way and show a model of diversity in STEM.”

For more information about QCC, people may contact Josh Martin, director of institutional communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.

Quinsigamond Community College provides the community with high quality, affordable higher education in Worcester County. As a regional leader in education and workforce development, QCC serves the diverse educational needs of Central Massachusetts by providing affordable, accessible, and high quality programming leading to transfer, career and lifelong learning.

Fitchburg State earns military friendly school designation

FITCHBURG – Fitchburg State University announced that it has earned the 2020-2021 Military Friendly® School designation.

Institutions earning the Military Friendly® School designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. More than 1,000 schools participated in the 2020-2021 survey with 695 earning the designation.

The 2020- 2021 Military Friendly® Schools list will be published in the May issue of G.I. Jobs magazine and can be found at www.militaryfriendly.com.

Methodology, criteria, and weightings were determined by Victory with input from the Military Friendly® Advisory Council of independent leaders in the higher education and military recruitment community. Final ratings were determined by combining the institution’s survey scores with the assessment of the institution’s ability to meet thresholds for student retention, graduation,

job placement, loan repayment, persistence (degree advancement or transfer) and loan default rates for all students and, specifically, for student veterans.

“We are honored to once again receive Military Friendly designation,” Fitchburg State President Richard S. Lapidus said. “Our campus community is committed to supporting those who served in achieving their academic goals, and we welcome the diverse life experiences that student veterans bring to our institution.”

“Our ability to apply a clear, consistent standard to colleges creates a competitive atmosphere that encourages colleges to invest in programs to provide educational outcomes that are better for the Military Community as a whole,” said Military Friendly’s National Director Josh Rosen.

For more information about Fitchburg State’s student veteran programs, people may visit <https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/offices-services-directory/veteran-services/>.

Public Safety

Barre Police Log

Sunday, March 15
9:20 a.m. Fire, Chimney Williamsville Road – Fire Extinguished
3:50 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Church Lane – Ambulance Signed Refusal

Tuesday, March 17
6:23 p.m. Safety Concern Main Street – Information Given

Wednesday, March 18
8:05 a.m. Safety Concern South Street – Officer Took Call
9:06 a.m. Identity Theft South Street – Information Taken
10:20 a.m. Officer Initiated South

Street – Criminal Complaint
Summons: Heath A. Dickson, 50, Barre
License Suspended, Operate Motor Vehicle
11:03 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency North Brookfield Road – Ambulance Signed Refusal

Thursday, March 19
5:44 p.m. Fire, Chimney Debra Lane – Fire Extinguished

Saturday, March 21
11:52 a.m. Animal ACO Call Gauthier Road – Message Delivered
3:02 p.m. Animal Complaint Old

Dana Road – Gone on Arrival
4:44 p.m. Fraud South Street – Officer Spoke to Party
6:16 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Broad Street – Report Filed

SOUTH BARRE

Monday, March 16
9:52 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident No Fire/EMS Response Wheelwright Road – Officer Advised

Tuesday, March 17
4:52 p.m. Trespassing North Brookfield Road – Officer Spoke to Party

Hubbardston Police Log

Monday, March 16
12:34 a.m. Missing Person Ragged Hill Road – Located/Found
5:34 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Williamsville Road – No Transport Required
6:58 p.m. Motor Vehicle Erratic Rte. 68 – Arrest(s) Made
Arrest: Brianna N. Walker, 27, Winchendon
OUI-Drugs; Marked Lanes Violation; Negligent Operation of Motor Vehicle

Tuesday, March 17
2:12 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Barre Road – Transported to Hospital
2:51 p.m. Property Damage Main Street – Report Filed
9:39 p.m. Property Damage Main Street – Officer Advised

Thursday, March 19
6:33 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Worcester Road – Ambulance Signed Refusal

Friday, March 20
7:46 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Mechanic Street – Ambulance Signed Refusal
11:11 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Barre Road – Services Rendered
11:30 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Barre Road – Referred to Other Agency

Saturday, March 21
1:36 p.m. Motor Vehicle Check Main Street – Criminal Complaint

Rutland Police Log

Sunday, March 15
8:28 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Main Street – Transported to Hospital
8:43 p.m. Motor Vehicle Erratic Main Street – Report Filed

Monday, March 16
5:54 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning
6:09 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pommogussett Road – Written Warning
6:31 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning
6:40 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
6:45 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
6:53 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
6:59 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
7:07 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
7:19 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Citation Issued
7:32 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
7:40 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
7:46 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
7:53 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning

2:28 p.m. Animal Lost and/or Found Miles Road – Report Filed
2:46 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:55 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
3:04 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
3:11 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
3:18 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning

Tuesday, March 17
6:30 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Personal Injury East County Road – Transported to Hospital
7:12 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Personal Injury Barre Paxton Road – Transported to Hospital
1:26 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
1:44 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:02 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:11 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:18 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:24 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
4:27 p.m. Disturbance, Person(s)

Barre Paxton Road – Peace Restored

Wednesday, March 18
2:28 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:49 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning

Thursday, March 19
2:34 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:39 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
2:48 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Citation Issued
2:51 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Citation Issued
2:56 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
3:13 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning
4:09 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Written Warning

Friday, March 20
7:06 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Pleasantdale Road – Citation Issued
2:52 p.m. Unattended Death Sunnyside Avenue – Investigated
5:53 p.m. Fire, Appliance Miles Road – Fire Extinguished
7:07 p.m. Fire, Chimney Lynnwood Drive – Fire Extinguished

Public Notices

NOTICE Town of New Braintree NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice of Public Hearing/Planning Board on **Monday, April 6, 2020 at 7pm** at the New Braintree Town Hall. In accordance with The Town of New Braintree Bylaws, Chapter 4 – Removal of Topsoil, Loam, Sand or Gravel, Sections 1-2, a hearing will be held for a Gravel Permit Application from Robert and Deann Caron of Barr Rd, New Braintree. All are invited to attend.

This meeting is open to the public and all are invited to attend.
3/19, 3/26/2020

Bids must be sealed and clearly marked “**FY21 Fuel Bids,**” and are due **no later than 2:00 p.m. on June 22, 2020 in the Town Administrator’s Office, Town Hall- 20 Memorial Drive, New Braintree, MA 01531.** The contact person is Kristen Thacker, Executive secretary, 508-867-2071 x 100 or selectboard@new-braintree.com . The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to only award a contract if it is in the best interest of the Town to do so.
3/19, 3/26/2020

Legal Notice FY2021 Road Materials Bid

Legal Notice Town of New Braintree, MA is seeking FY 2021 Invitation for Bids for Road Materials in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30B, §5. The bid will be awarded based on the most responsible, responsive bidder offering the lowest price. **The IFB will be available on April 13, 2020 in the Executive Secretary’s Office, 20 Memorial Drive New Braintree, MA 01531.**

Bids must be sealed and clearly marked “**FY21 Road Materials Bid,**” and are due **no later than 2:00 p.m. on June 22, 2020 in the Town Administrator’s Office, Town Hall- 20 Memorial Drive, New Braintree, MA 01531.** The contact person is Kristen Thacker, Executive Secretary 508-867-2071 x 100 or selectboard@new-braintree.com . The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to only award a contract if it is in the best interest of the Town to do so.
3/19, 3/26/2020

Town of New Braintree

In accordance with MGL, Chapter 87, Section 3, the Tree Warden will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 12:00 noon** in the Select Board’s Meeting Room at the Town Hall on 20 Memorial Drive to consider the removal of trees on Oakham Road. The trees to be removed have been clearly marked. All interested parties are invited to attend.

This meeting is open to the public and all are invited to attend.
3/19, 3/26/2020

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts’ public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

BUSINESS

Turley Publications is liberal with regard to its business coverage policies, but we do have some standards folks need to understand. First, local businesses and merchants are just as much institutions in our towns as the library and schools. Without them, there are no towns.

We will feature coverage of local businesses that are new, have a major expansion, moving, closing, under new management or ownership, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or have been thrust into the news realm. Merchants can request that coverage through the editor, or for our existing advertising clients, through their ad representatives.

For more information on business coverage for the Barre Gazette, please email edowner@turley.com.

Church News

Local pastors offer sermons

Note: The Barre Gazette staff reached out to area churches if they would provide sermons during the Coronavirus pandemic. Any pastor, priest or rabbi wishing to participate may email either barrenews@turley.com or edowner@turley.com.

Barre Congregational Church
Sunday, March 15:
A Pastoral message:
“Is the Lord among us?”
Scripture: Exodus 17 v 1-7

Greetings, dear Members and Friends of Barre Congregational Church

I am writing to you, our beloved congregation, from my home. I miss seeing your faces and hearing you sing this morning. This, however, is a time when all of us are called to come together to do what is best to help prevent the current spread of the Coronavirus, which has now affected many countries around the world, as well as our country and our own State, Massachusetts. Many around the world have fallen ill, and many have lost their lives. It is a time to make the kind of decision that is good for everyone.

We are also reminded that today is the third Sunday of Lent, a time when we as Christians remember the journey Christ had taken, preparing Himself for the ultimate sacrifice on the cross. I am asking that we take the time today and each day, to pray for ourselves, for one another and the world and may this message from the Book of Exodus, Chapter 17 verse 1-7 give us hope for the days ahead.

Scripture Reading: Exodus 17:1-7
17:1 From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. 17:2 The people quarreled with Moses, and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” 17:3 But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” 17:4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” 17:5 The LORD said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 17:6 I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. 17:7 He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

The Exodus: A test of faith for the people of Israel

The wilderness experience described in the book of Exodus is a time when the faith of the Israelites is tested endlessly. We see them go on the most challenging and extraordinary journey through the desert of Sin. We see them suffering, we see them hungry and we hear their grumbings. We see God’s intervention with manna and quails and in this chapter, we see the escalation of their conflict with Moses and God, because they are not just hungry on their journey. They are thirsty. They need water. They are upset. The manna from heaven did not give them the long-lasting security and faith in God, who, unbeknownst to them, could hear their every plea and see their suffering. They are outraged at this horrible place, this desert with all its dangers. (Verse 3). Theirs is a strong outburst, which carried the legitimate feelings and reality of a people who have followed Moses through very dangerous territory. After all, they did not return to Egypt, even though they were longing for the pots of Egypt.

Moses’ leadership is being tested as he is seeking God’s help and guidance during this trying time. “What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me,” he cried out to God. Up to this point we have seen the incredible leadership of Moses. He guided them, he encouraged them and he helped strengthen their faith. But here in Chapter 17, we see an exhausted and frustrated Moses. Read verse 2, second part. Why, put the Lord to the test?

Is the Lord among us or not? The wilderness is now the place of despair, where the people of Israel find it difficult to believe that the Lord is amongst them. Why must they suffer so much? In verse 7 it reads: And he (Moses) called the place, Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the Lord, saying, “Is the Lord among us or not?”

But the wilderness is also becoming the place of hope and relief when God shows up again in a miraculous and ceremonial manner, providing them with the so much-needed water. God instructed Moses to walk ahead towards the rock at Horeb, and bring the elders with him and God promised to stand there, waiting. Moses was to take his staff and strike the rock. He did, and water came out of the rock. A rock that was solid, provided them their much-needed water. All of this did not happen on its own. No, God went ahead, and stood there, waiting, supporting, providing. The question “Is the Lord among us or not?” received a miraculous answer.

What a promise.
What a God we serve.

The story of the Exodus is a story of promise, a promise that God will liberate the people of Israel from their bondage under the Egyptians and give them a new land, which did happen. It is a story in which God wants to show them that they do have a living God. This story gives us hope when times are hard. It demonstrates the realities of our earthly struggles. It is the story of displacement, of the fight for survival, of hunger and thirst. It is a story of faith and lack of faith. It is a story of inspiring leadership and frustrated and exhausted leadership. It is a story of listening to God in very difficult circumstances, and it is a story of following God’s instructions.

Is this the same God, of today, you ask? We all sometimes face difficult times in our lives. We sometimes experience hopelessness and fear and despair as well. Do we wrestle with our faith in God, challenging God, “Are You here among us?” What is this illness and that suffering all about, Lord? And what is this Coronavirus all about? Where are you, Lord in all of this?

From God’s point of view these are good and important questions to ask. God wants us to seek and trust God under all circumstances. We do not know all the whys and hows of our suffering sometimes, but God is consistent in God’s desire that we seek and trust God. The Lord goes ahead and stands there, waiting for us to listen, to believe, to hit the rock and see the promise of God unfold. It is through unwavering faith, even when we are concerned, tired, and grumbling and quarreling with one another, when God appears.

Let us all believe that God is with us. The Holy Spirit is our Guide. It is my prayer that we will bring all our worries to God, and that we will find God waiting and revealing God’s love and compassion in ways beyond our understanding. Amen.

May God bless and protect us all,
Pastor Margaret Keyser
Barre Congregational Church

New Life Assembly of God

Clearly, we are in the midst of challenging times - times when it is easy to fall into the snares of fear, anxiety and panic. If you do not believe the validity of these remarks, take a ride to your nearest shopping center and look at both the empty

shelves and the concerned faces of frenzied shoppers. If you happen to come upon toilet paper, pick some up for me (just kidding).

In all seriousness, however, this is a time to consider the command of the apostle Paul to the ancient church at Colossae (Colossians 3:1-2): “Since . . . you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”

Now I do not believe that Scripture is telling us to turn a blind eye to the world around us. I do not believe that Paul, herein, is calling us to function unaware of the circumstances of our time. I do believe that he is telling us that there needs to be a directionality to our attention. In a time when it is all-too-easy to lose yourself in news media, social media, and beyond, we need to set our gaze upon things above (i.e., Christ)—not just earthly things.

Can I ask you a question or two? What is dominating your attention and occupying your mind at this very moment? Is it Christ and the things of God? Have you given more thought to Christ or to the Coronavirus in recent days? Be aware of what is dominating your heart.

I want to share a quote from a preacher from centuries past: Robert Murray McCheyne (1813–1843). Allow the following words to challenge you to adjust your focus: “For every look at self—take ten looks at Christ. Live near to Jesus—and all things will appear little to you in comparison with eternal realities. How many millions of dazzling pearls and gems are at this moment hidden in the deep recesses of the ocean caves. Likewise, unfathomable oceans of grace are in Christ for you. Dive and dive again—you will never come to the bottom of these depths.” As Scripture commands, “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus” (Hebrews 12:2).

These sentiments drive me to consider an account from the life of the apostle Peter (Matthew 14:26–32). The story opens with the following: “26 When the disciples saw him [Jesus] walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. 27 But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage. It is I. Don’t be afraid.” 28 “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” 29 “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.”

Take note that Peter actually walked on the water—incredible. As far as I know, he is the only other person in history to perform such a feat in Christ. However, the story does not end there. Consider the following: “30 But when he [Peter] saw the wind, he was afraid and [began] to sink...”

When did Peter begin to sink? The moment his focus shifted from Christ to the circumstances around him. As long as Peter was focused on Christ, all was well (even in the midst of the storm). Yet the moment his gaze was moved to something else, he was overwhelmed in the waters.

Do you feel overwhelmed right now? Do you feel like you are drowning in the midst of the troubled waters of this life? At times we all do. If so, what you are focused on? Is it Christ or is it something else? If you want to “walk on the water” you must continually ensure that your attention and affections are on Him.

“But Pastor,” you may say, “I’m already drowning—what do I do?” I challenge you to do as Peter did: call out to the Lord to rescue you (see Matthew 14:30). Jesus was quick to hear the cry of Peter’s heart and happy to pull him up. You will find that He is still able to save. The storms may be greater than you—but not Him.

As I close, I admit that we are all going through a period of earthly crisis. These are particularly challenging times (on a truly global scale). Yet, the One who walks on the water is still calling us to “come” if we will.

Keep your eyes on Him and see what He can do in and through you. And if you are starting to flounder, call upon the One who is faithful. You will find He is never too far removed.

Pastor James Foley
New Life Assembly of God
60 Main St. South Barre
www.NewLifeBarre.org

Barre Congregational Church
Sunday, March 22
A Pastoral message: The Lord is our Shepherd
Scripture Reading: Psalm 23

Grace and peace to you, dear members and friends of the Barre Congregational Church. I am writing to you from my home on this fourth Sunday of Lent, a time when we as Christians remember the journey Christ had taken, preparing Himself for the ultimate sacrifice on the cross. As many Christians around the world today gather in prayer for God’s mercy and protection against the Coronavirus, I am asking that we too take the time today and each day, to pray for ourselves, for one another and the world, and may this message from Psalm 23 give us hope in the days ahead...

While we are physically separated from one another, we can be assured that God is with us and still speaks to us in the same way as during our worship services in the sanctuary.

Please pray this prayer in silence...
Dear God, we come before You as a congregation, acknowledging You as our Maker and Shepherd.

We are like sheep today, needing You and trusting that You will take care of us during this very difficult Coronavirus crisis.

We confess our belief in You, Your Son and the Holy Spirit.

We ask that You give us faith to rest in the knowledge that with You we will walk through the good times and bad times.

Help us not to fear, but to believe and trust in Your holy power and Your protection and remind us of the sacrifice Your Son went through for our salvation.

We pray for all our needs and ask You for Your forgiveness of our sins.

Amen
Scripture Reading: Psalm 23
Please spend a moment and read through the Psalm prayerfully...

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters;

3 He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for His name’s sake.

4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

I love the words of Old Testament scholar, Bernard W. Anderson, when he says, “the psalms are Israel’s way of responding to Yahweh’s active presence in its history. They are anthems to the glory of God!” I can imagine how the people of Israel needed to find creative ways to communicate with God, and give expression to their joys, their distress and their sorrows.

They needed a vehicle to say, “Yes Lord, we know You are with us! We believe! We have faith, even though the journey is hard!” The Book of Psalms is therefore at the heart of the Old Testament, says Anderson. We may not know exactly the history and background of

every psalm, but collectively, they have become to the people of Israel what our hymns have become for us, messages rising to the throne of God!

A Statement of Certainty, “The Lord is my Shepherd!”

In Psalm 23, perhaps the world’s

most beloved psalm, we find David, a former shepherd who became King of Israel, declaring his faith in God, and describing life with God as an experience of serenity -- of green pastures and quiet waters. If we were to close our eyes, we could, like David, maybe find ourselves sitting on a stone somewhere in and around Barre, watching the beauty of the fields, and listening to the sounds of a little stream, and together give glory to God for the beauty of the earth, and the peace of God with us. David explains how Yahweh is making him lie down in those pastures and leading him in paths of righteousness. His is a picture of certainty, of peace and of resting in God’s grace.

David’s state of serenity is not without some intrusion, though. We see in the middle of this psalm the image of him walking through the valley of the shadow of death. We must remember that the shepherds in Biblical times traveled long distances, which at times could be very dangerous. It appears that David was traveling from Judea to the heights of

Galilee, through dangerous canyons and caves and narrow trails, hence this description of a valley of death. So, on the one hand we see him in an incredibly peaceful environment, but then his journey took him through the valley of the shadow of death.

If we go back to verse 1 of this psalm, we see a statement of such certainty: “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want”. As a former shepherd, David uses this shepherd imagery, knowing the importance of the relationship between shepherds and their sheep. The shepherd knew his sheep well, and took care of them under all circumstances, whether good or bad. He understood what it meant to be a shepherd, leading and caring, and knowing the needs of the sheep. Robert J. Morgan wrote in his book on the 23rd Psalm, “During his (David’s) formation as a shepherd he thought of himself as a sheep, trusting the Lord to do for him what he was doing for his flock”. To make a statement like this, the Lord is my Shepherd, therefore meant that David had experienced God’s goodness, caring presence and guidance under all circumstances. The Hebrew word for the Lord is Yahweh, which means I am, and in this verse, he meant to say that Yahweh is present now, not in the distant future! God is with us

now and always, in good times and bad. Yahweh’s existence is so real in David’s experience that it does not matter that there are these shadows in the valleys of death. He will be safely led through those valleys, verse 4 assures us.

David will not be in want, says verse 1, because the Lord is his shepherd under all circumstances. In this context he expresses the gratitude towards God for being with him when he is in need, feels abandoned and in danger. He will not lack anything. He will fear no evil, he will be comforted, and he will experience the intimate presence of the Lord forever.

May we rest in David’s faith
This psalm speaks of faith in a Living God. It is a psalm of light and strength and hope during dark times. Many have found their comfort in this psalm. It speaks of God as a Shepherd who wants to help, lead, guide and protect us as well, during this crisis.

As human beings it is natural to fear in the face of this enormous crisis we are dealing with.

It is normal to worry about our own health and that of our loved ones and friends and colleagues. What is important, though, is to believe and to say out loud, that the Lord knows all of this, that the Lord is our Shepherd, and knows our fears, our needs and our circumstances. I pray that we all will believe and say like the people of Israel, “Yes Lord, we know You are with us! We believe! We have faith, even though the journey is hard!” I pray that we will not lose faith in this valley of the shadow of death, but that we will walk through it with the help and presence of our Lord, our Shepherd. May God soon rescue us and bring us to a place of green pastures and quiet waters. Amen!

Prayer and benediction:
Dear Lord, please help us to believe that You are our Shepherd.

Protect us all and lead us through this crisis and strengthen our faith in You

Fill us with love for You and one another, now and always.

Give us Your peace...

May the grace of God, and the love of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forever

Amen
Pastor Margaret Keyser

Obituary

Virginia B. (Edwards) Menegoni, 91

BARRE – Virginia B. (Edwards) Menegoni, 91, of Cutoff Road, passed away at home on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 following a brief illness, with loved ones at her side.

Born in Oakham on June 14, 1928, she was a daughter of the late Stanley and Blanche (Bydwo) Edwards and grew up on the family farm, helping to raise the chickens and picking berries, as well as making deliveries.

The family moved to Barre in the 1940s and Virginia graduated from Barre High School in 1946.

On Oct. 30, 1948, Virginia married Anthony Menegoni and enjoyed 51 years of marriage until his death on April 2, 2000. Virginia cared for her husband during his declining health for 5 years.

During the 1980s, Virginia worked for the Hudson (N.H.) Bus Lines, as well as working for E.P. Wine, Inc. in Barre for over 20 years doing secretarial and book-keeping duties before retiring.

Virginia was a Communicant of St. Francis of Assisi Church in Barre. The family extends a special thank you to Father Jamie for his faith, happiness and smile that Virginia adored.

During the 1960s she was an active member of the Barre Women’s Club.

Virginia loved her family, especially doting over the grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who were her heart and soul. She also enjoyed her girls weekends away, doing jigsaw and crossword puzzles, as well as traveling, which included Yellowstone National Park, Italy, Florida and Aruba as just a few of her favorite places. Virginia was an avid gardener spending many hours tending to her flowers.

Virginia never dwelled on the negative, always focusing on the



positive. She loved life, enjoyed many family gatherings and will be sadly missed.

Virginia is survived by her daughter, Joan Riendeau and her husband, Ed, of Barre; sons, Attilio “Lee” Menegoni and his wife, Elise, of Nashua,

New Hampshire and Anthony Menegoni and his wife, Rachel, of Barre; grandsons, Christopher Menegoni and his partner, Bridget Chaffee of Turners Falls, and Shaun Cannon of Barre; a granddaughter, April Cannon and her wife, Karen Foster of Northampton; great-grandchildren, Velouria Menegoni, Jesse Foster-Cannon and Gavin Foster-Cannon; a sister, Irene Blore of Glendale, California; a brother, Richard Edwards of Connecticut; several nephews and nieces; and dear friends, Dick and Jeannie Whipple of Barre.

Besides her parents and husband, Virginia was predeceased by a brother, John Edwards.

There are no calling hours.

A memorial Mass will be celebrated at a later date to be announced.

Interment will be in the Paxton Memorial Park Cemetery.

Donations in Virginia’s memory should be made to St. Francis of Assisi Emergency Fund, P.O. Box 186, South Barre, MA 01074.

Witty’s Funeral Home, 158 South Main St., Orange, is assisting the family. You may offer your sympathy online at WWW.WITTYFUNERALHOME.COM

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QUABBIN & SUBURBAN – FRIDAY AT NOON
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5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
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21 Base Price \$28.50	22 Base Price \$27.00	23 Base Price \$27.50	24 Base Price \$28.00
25 Base Price \$28.50	26 Base Price \$29.00	27 Base Price \$29.50	28 Base Price \$30.00
29 Base Price \$30.50	30 Base Price \$31.00	31 Base Price \$31.50	32 Base Price \$32.00
33 Base Price \$32.50	34 Base Price \$33.00	35 Base Price \$33.50	36 Base Price \$34.00
37 Base Price \$34.50	38 Base Price \$35.00	39 Base Price \$35.50	40 Base Price \$36.00

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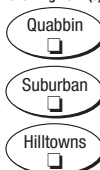
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Second Chance to open new animal hospital

SOUTHBRIDGE – The nonprofit Second Chance Animal Services added clear access to veterinary care to their mission in 2013 and never looked back. They knew that while adoptions are an important part of helping pets get a Second Chance, they needed to focus on preventing surrenders in the first place.

Second Chance started offering veterinary services back in 2006 when they opened their low cost spay/neuter clinic. They quickly recognized additional needs for these pets and moved on to include vaccine clinics at their facility and throughout the state. In 2009 Second Chance expanded their spay/neuter clinic and in 2013 began the journey to full service veterinary care. The organization went from helping a few thousand pets a year to over 40,000 pets a year (in 2019).

Access to services, like in humans, plays a vital role in keeping pets healthy and in their homes. “We didn’t realize when we opened our first full-service hospital how great the impact could be on the pets in the community” stated Sheryl Blancato, CEO. “It didn’t take us long to open up our second hospital in Worcester, and then our third hospital in Springfield.”

A staggering 23 million animals are living at or below the poverty level and 77 percent of pets in underserved communities have never seen a veterinarian according to the Humane Society of the United States. “Looking at these numbers, we see it’s imperative to give pet owners access to

care within a reasonable driving distance,” says Blancato.

Second Chance recently announced their next hospital, which will be located in Southbridge, is slated to open in the fall of 2021. This hospital, unlike the previous three, will include a partnership with the local vocational school. “We realized that to keep up with the growing needs of pets in the community, we had to include the next generation of the animal welfare community. With Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School providing the education and our hospital providing real world experience, it will be a win-win-win for all involved.” The lower level of the new hospital will be home to the Bay Path Veterinary Education Center featuring classroom space and a learning lab for the vocational students in the new veterinary science program. The full-service hospital on the main floor will provide the year-round, full-service veterinary care that Second Chance is well known for.

Second Chance is a nonprofit 501c3 tax exempt organization that began in 1999 in East Brookfield and relies solely on donations from grants to operate. The organization operates an adoption center in East Brookfield, Community Veterinary Hospitals in North Brookfield, Springfield, and Worcester. Second Chance helps over 40,000 pets a year through adoption, spay/neuter, veterinary care, community outreach, educational outreach programs, training, and a pet food pantry.

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